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MILITARY MEMOIRS

OF

FIELD MARSHAL

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

by

CAPTAIN MOYLE SHERER.

VOL. I.

94040

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MILITARY MEMOIRS

OF

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S FIRST APPOINTMENTS. — HIS FIRST SERVICE IN FLANDERS. — THE RETREAT FROM HOLLAND. — OBSERVATIONS UPON THAT CAMPAIGN — ON THE BRITISH ARMY. — THE DUKE SAILS FOR INDIA.

THE honourable Arthur Wellesley, now field-marshal of England, and duke of Wellington, a younger son of the late earl of Mornington, and a brother of the present marquis Wellesley, received his first commission as an ensign of infantry in 1787. He was then in his eighteenth year, and had been regularly educated for the profession of his choice. He studied for a time at the military academy of Angers in France, whither, at an early age, he was prudently removed from Eton, where science is not taught.

As subaltern and captain he served both in the cavalry and infantry, and enjoyed the rare advantage of an early acquaintance with the field duties of both those arms.

In the spring of 1793 he was promoted to a majority in the 33d regiment, and was advanced to the lieutenant-colonelcy of that corps, by purchase, in the autumn of the same year.

A young man, in the command of a fine regiment, he sailed upon his first service from the Cove of Cork in the month of May, 1794.

The corps landed at Ostend in the latter end of June, and was already in garrison, when lord Moira (with the troops originally destined for a chivalrous but unwise attempt in Britany) arrived at that place, to hold it as a point of support for the allied army in Flanders.

The enemy, however, was already in possession of Ypres on the one side, and of Bruges on the other. Near the former place the Austrian general, Clairfait, had just sustained three successive defeats, and had retired upon Ghent:—Walmoden, the Hanoverian commander, being thus compelled to evacuate Bruges, had marched to join him.

That brave prince, the duke of York, whose misfortune it was to have a command so ill-defined, that it would have perplexed a much older and a far more experienced leader, was, as a consequence of these defeats, driven from his position at Tournay, and placed in circumstances very critical and disheartening.

In this state of affairs lord Moira called a council of war; and it was there agreed, that the mere defence of Ostend, to which object his orders confined him, was not of so great importance as the immediate succour of the duke of York. Ostend was evacuated on the 29th of June. With about eight thousand men lord Moira marched by Bruges (from which place the French retired on his approach) to Ghent. On the same day the garrison under colonel Vyse embarked with such order and expedition, that

the town was clear both of troops and stores before sunset. This brigade proceeded to the Scheldt, and, disembarking on the banks of that river, joined the camp of the duke of York before Antwerp.

It was here that lieutenant-colonel Wellesley, who accompanied his regiment by sea from Ostend, first saw an army in the field. It was at this moment, and upon this theatre of war, where there was no sound but of reverses, and no prospect but one dreary with expected disappointments, that the conqueror in so many battles made his first essay in arms.

Here he received his first lessons in practical warfare, and here obtained that early notice and early praise, which bestow confidence, and which animate ambition.

In the formal and stationary camps, and in the confined and chilling operations of this defensive campaign, there were few opportunities of distinction; yet some occurred, and they were eagerly improved. Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley commanded the 33d regiment in every affair in which it was engaged. On the river Neethe; in a warm affair near the village of Boxtel; and in a hot skirmish on the Waal, it did good service.

The allied army was not in strength to face the weighty masses of the French in battle; but the British posts were occasionally disturbed; and to secure and preserve their communications some fighting was necessary. In the affairs alluded to our young commander was not unobserved. At the close of the campaign he was *selected* by general David Dundas to cover, with the brigade to which

his regiment was then attached, the memorable retreat from Holland: no mean distinction; for Dundas was an officer of high reputation, a strict disciplinarian, and an intrepid soldier.

It was in the middle of January that this movement was decided on; for two months previous the service had been trying. Both officers and soldiers were exhausted by continual fatigues; they had to support the rigours of winter, and long nights of ceaseless watching without the clothing or the comforts suited to that cold climate and to the inclement season.

The sufferings on the retreat were yet more severe. The route from the frozen banks of the Lech to those of the Yssel lay through the dreary and inhospitable provinces of Gueldreland and Over-Yssel. The way was over desert and flat heaths: there were but few houses on the route, and these scattered singly or in small villages, or in mere hamlets, affording a seldom and insufficient cover for the troops. It was a hard frost: the wheel-tracks were covered with snow; and bitter winds and blinding storms of sleet blew keenly from the north-east, directly meeting them as they marched. If the fatigued soldier reposed too long, drowsiness would steal over him; and if not roused and urged forward on his road, he slept the sleep of death. Such casualties were numerous. Under these circumstances no common zeal and activity were necessary in covering the retreat. The command of the rear-guard was a post of honour: it was filled with credit, and stamped lieutenant-colonel Wellesley then as a man of promise. Such was

the rude experience of his first campaign; a campaign, however, pregnant with useful lessons. It had been carried on by councils of war,—*divided councils;*—a campaign where the talents and courage of the generals were paralysed for want of men, *materiel*, and money, and no less for want of well defined commands, and full powers of action. Clairfait, the Austrian, was both able and brave; Walmoden of Hanover was a man highly considered; and the British prince, though young and of no experience, was full of ardour and spirit, and was not without firm and intelligent advisers.

But in this war, from the moment that Prussia entered Poland, the motives of all the continental allies became suspected, and the popularity of their cause in the Netherlands soon expired. When the inhabitants clearly saw the inability to protect them, they became at first fearful, then wearied, and at length hostile; a consequence that in no theatre of war should ever cause surprise, and is rarely a theme for any just reproach. For the irritated feelings of a retiring and mortified soldiery some allowance may be made; but the abuse poured out in England, at that period, upon the people of Flanders and Holland was bitter and unmerited.

Nothing but a sacred love of liberty, or a love for the existing government so strong as to supply, if possible, its place, or such a dread and hatred of the invader as prompts all sacrifice for his expulsion, will ever engage the peaceful dwellers in towns and villages in the toil and peril of a present and protracted warfare. Under all governments the smith

plies his anvil, the rustic follows his plough, the citizen opens his shop in the morning and counts his gains in the evening; and all these ask but to perform their daily tasks, and eat their daily bread in peace. They ask individual liberty, and personal repose. It is true that the people of the Netherlands had shouted round the state coach of the emperor that very spring at Brussels. The pageantry of the inauguration of a duke of Brabant had amused their eyes, and cheated them of a few cheers; but events soon showed the weakness of their Cæsar, and in the moment of trial they forsook him. The Dutch had more to contend for, and were, at first, in earnest; but they, too, felt their own weakness; they saw that of the allies; and they were hopeless of any effectual resistance. Moreover, as a maritime nation, they had always a jealousy of the English, and this prevented the cordiality of a generous co-operation. The French, for which they may thank the coarse policy of their enemies, were all united: they had numbers and energy; and, flushed with the triumph of Fleurus, they were not to be resisted by a motley army of jealous allies, acting amid a people indifferent to their success. The English evacuated Holland, execrating the inhabitants; and the Hollanders saw them depart with no equivocal expressions of their dislike.

Notwithstanding all their sufferings, the English soldiers returned home in good heart; satisfied that they had maintained the national character for true valour on every occasion that offered for its display.

They returned, too, with a feeling about the *bonnets rouges* and *sans-culottes* of republican France, differing little from the prejudice of their forefathers against the wooden shoes and *soup maigre* of her monarchy. Well for England that they did. By this feeling, conspiring with the old national antipathies, and combined with the good sense and right judgment of the reflecting, the pestilence of the licentious and infidel sentiments which, at that period, poisoned the whole atmosphere of France, was stayed within the confines of her own conquests.

That English spirit was the safeguard of the people from the corrupting and inflammatory language of those very levellers who were soon after trodden under foot by the iron heel of a military despot; an idol of their own raising, and the object of a slavish though splendid worship.

That spirit enabled England to carry through, with perseverance and patience, a long and glorious war; — a war, not as many perversely contend, for the weak cause and the weak house of Bourbon, but for her own sacred institutions.

Somewhere the battle must have been fought; and if Spain and the Netherlands had not furnished fields for the contest, it must sooner or later have been fought upon her own green hills at home; and the pendants of her gallant fleets, instead of flying in constant triumph upon the far ocean, must have been drooping on the dull watch in sight of her own shores. That spirit in her fleets and armies, under the guidance of such instruments as God gave us in their leaders, has raised England to that pinnacle of power, wealth, and influence, to which she

has now attained, and from which nothing but suicidal folly can cast her down.

But we return to the steps of one who has been honoured, above all other instruments, individually, in bringing about these great results: — be it remembered, too, not as an aspiring usurper, but as the free-born general of a constitutional army, as the loyal subject of an English king, and the faithful servant of the English people.

Such was the aspect of our continental relations at the period just mentioned, that, for a time, the British soldier could see no field in all Europe whereon to display his enterprise and win renown.

Short, however, as was this campaign in Flanders, though there was no battle, and but little fighting, it had shown to Wellesley a something of war upon the grand scale; for it was in an army of sixty-eight battalions, and eighty squadrons, that he had served. He had seen troops of various nations, differing in their discipline, their habits, their costume, and their aspect. He had heard those grand sounds with which he was to have so long and so glorious a familiarity in after-life: the distant boom of the hostile gun; the nigh thunder of batteries of cannon; the rolling of musketry; the tread of columns; the trampling of squadrons, and the voice of the trumpet. There was yet another sound he had heard, — the dauntless cheers, the loud hurrah of those soldiers whom, under happier auspices, and on a more glorious theatre of action, he was so often to lead against the enemies of his country, and to guide to victory and glory.

While he had witnessed the excellent spirit and brave bearing of English soldiers, he had also marked their defects, and listened, probably, to the complaints made against their discipline, interior economy, and temper, by their Austrian allies, with no light or inattentive ear. The Austrians in that campaign reproached the British for being disdainful; admitted that they were brave, and ready for all great occasions, but complained that they were indolent, negligent, and indifferent in the discharge of all those minor calls,—those labours, fatigues, and pickets, in which the duties of a prolonged warfare mainly consist. High courage was, at that time, as always, the great distinction, the brilliant merit of our soldiery; but the system of our regimental economy was comparatively bad; all our military institutions were defective and vicious; few departments of the army were conducted with intelligence, some with a known want of integrity: the commissariat and medical department were notoriously incapable; nor were the talents and acquirements necessary for the prompt and intelligent discharge of their important duties commonly found even among officers of the general staff.

Too much praise can never be assigned to the wise regulations by which the late duke of York laboured for years, at a subsequent period, to remedy these sad evils, and great was the improvement he effected; but it is to the preparatory system and discipline of a Dundas, a Cathcart, and a Moore, and to the large and practical application of their principles by a Wellington, that we owe the present character, efficiency, and, above all, the present fame of the English army.

On the return of the troops from Holland, the 33d regiment, as soon as it was reported fit for service, was ordered upon an expedition then fitting out against the West Indies, and sailed, early in 1795, with the fleet under the orders of admiral Christian.

The fleet made several attempts to put out to sea, but was repeatedly driven back by adverse winds. Owing to these delays, the 33d was countermanded, ordered to land, and sailed again in April, 1796, for the Cape and India. Thus a star which might have set early in the West in obscurity, and perhaps death, arose in the East with life and brightness.

Lord Mornington, the present marquis Wellesley, being appointed governor-general of India in 1797, the interests of his brother were not forgotten. Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley was promoted to the rank of colonel.

During his voyage to India, it is yet remembered by one of his fellow-passengers, that he passed much time in his cabin diligently reading, to prepare himself for command and conduct in that country. Distinguishable from young men of his age and station by no affected singularities, he was quietly laying the foundation of his renown. Birth and high connection had given him quick promotion and early advancement to responsible command,—but they could do no more. Men grow not to greatness by accident, but by those personal endowments, which are, in the first place, the gifts of Providence; and after, by a constant improvement of them, by steady preparation, strong will, and undiverted resolve.

CHAP. II.

MILITARY ASPECT OF INDIA.—POLITICAL STATE.—THE WAR WITH TIPPOO SULTAN.—ASSEMBLY OF THE BRITISH ARMY.—CHARGE OF COLONEL WELLESLEY.—MARCH OF THE ARMY.—AFFAIR OF MALAVELLY.—AFFAIR OF POSTS ON INVESTING SERINGAPATAM.

MILITARY services in the East rarely obtain that notice to which they are justly entitled. The scene in which they are acted is remote; and the laurels of our brave men from India have always lost a something of their freshness before we gaze on them at home. Moreover, it is an effort of the imagination to realise the aspect of Asiatic warfare, and to many readers such efforts are at once painful and vain.

They content themselves with considering that the enemies in India are *black*. They draw some distinction, indeed, between the black of Africa and of Asia; but, so far as bodily power and personal prowess are concerned, it is in favour of the former. The Asiatic is thought an effeminate and silken slave, whose nerves tremble at the report of a cannon, and whose prancing horses are only used for security or flight. This is no fancy picture; Englishmen accounted intelligent thus spoke of India fifty short years ago; and to this hour, except among those interested in Indian affairs by the course of their studies, by connection with the services or commerce of that country, or by that large and

active spirit of enquiry which an attachment to the cause of schools and missions has awakened, a like ignorance obtains, and a like apathy in the concerns of India is always manifest.

Before the period, however, of which we are about to speak, the attention of England had been a little roused by the talk of bloody and severe combats in the East, in which the superiority of her arms, though triumphantly maintained, had not been undisputed.

It required all the energy of lord Cornwallis, and the utmost efforts of his brave officers and gallant men, to reduce the strength, and humble the pride, of Tippoo, the sultan of Mysore. This prince inherited, from a warlike father, a kingdom, usurped by violence and enlarged by conquest, and with it the cherished spirit of that stern and bitter hatred to the English which Hyder Ali had always manifested in life, and recommended in death. The names of Hyder and Tippoo had sounded on the English ear as those of foemen not to be totally despised; and a vague notion of what Mahometan fierceness, guided by French counsels and French discipline, might effect, caused them to estimate anew, though still imperfectly, both the dangers and the glory of Indian service. The fact is, Tippoo had a trained infantry, a numerous artillery, expert gunners, and an active courageous cavalry. In the discipline and instruction of his infantry and artillery he was aided by adventurers from France. These men were greatly encouraged and richly rewarded.

Although Tippoo was undoubtedly and by far the most formidable enemy of England among the native princes, yet neither were the Mahratta chieftains

mere leaders of predatory horse. In the army of Scindia*, there were seventy-two battalions of foot, under French officers, organised in ten brigades, to which were attached no fewer than four hundred and sixty pieces of cannon. To this force must be added vast numbers of irregular infantry armed only with a matchlock, or with sword and shield, or with the spear. Many thousands of these last were composed of Patans or Rohillas, men of a fierce and desperate courage, robust and hardy, patiently enduring fatigue, and never appalled by fire.

With regard to the Mahratta horse, little if any discipline was ever successfully established among them. The best Mahratta horsemen serve by tenure of land, either personal, or under a chief landholder; others come as volunteers, to be enrolled for pay; or they are the hired riders of the horses of others again, who receive all the pay themselves. The volunteers are numerous, and consist of such individuals, floating loose on the surface of Indian society, as have by any means possessed themselves of a horse and arms; but they are all of the military cast, that is, born, bred, and exercised to the use of arms. India abounds with martial and warlike figures.

These horsemen are not cowards; they fear not death, they fear not the point of the spear or the edge of the sabre. Hence, if prey or baggage or vengeance be their object, they will hover near, they will invite the skirmish, they will challenge the personal encounter, they will ride up even to the very muzzles of your muskets. But to excite them

* The most considerable of those chiefs.

to this, there must be the stimulus of a golden hope, or of a bitter hate; for otherwise, as warfare is their condition of life, they are not eager in action. Above all things, they dread the exposure or loss of their horses, which are at once the sources of their subsistence, their titles of service, their treasure, and their pride. It may be readily understood that these men abhor the irksomeness and restraint of all exercise or discipline. They sweep wide provinces by rapid and desolating marches. Terror tells of their coming; tears and famine, silence and blood, show where they have passed. Whenever they venture as a body to draw up and await a disciplined cavalry, they become an easy conquest. They have no good formation; their very crowds encumber them; the fronts presented by regular and well trained squadrons, and rapidly changed or wheeled at the blast of a trumpet, confound and perplex them; they are scattered like a flock of sheep, and sabred as they fly. In any contest, however, where infantry are thinned by fire, or broken by any accident or difficulty of ground, these horse, who scramble any where, will pour among them with fury, and with lance and sword do terribly the work of death. A large host of them, seen from afar, presents a brilliant appearance: they have turbans and garments of many colours; the horses of the chiefs, and of all such as can afford it, are showily caparisoned; and, in particular, the breastplates glitter with silver: every neck is curved by a standing martingale; and their many neighings come down upon the wind loud and lordly. Their horses are, for the most part, tall, bony, and vicious; the

poorest of these Mahrattas, however, are mounted on low lean cattle, and their equipment is of a correspondent meanness. They have, also, some of them, a beautiful kind of pony, handsome and spirited, rising above thirteen hands, and prized even by their chiefs, but not for battle.

Such are Indian armies; and the reader should possess the picture to be enabled to follow, with a livelier interest, the services of colonel Wellesley in the East. He should be told also that India is a country where the roads are difficult, and sometimes, from the nature of the soil, for whole days and weeks impassable; — that on the plains they are broad tracks; in the mountainous country, narrow and rocky passes, requiring immense labour in the transport of artillery; and that every river, nay, at some seasons, every stream, is a serious obstacle. A few of the large fortresses of the native powers are armed and defended, though imperfectly, yet much after the European manner; but the many are lofty and difficult of access; constructed of solid masonry, with double and winding gateways; having walls of a terrific height, without any ramparts, and round towers at the angles. It is quite fearful to stand upon some of the walls our soldiers have mounted in hot blood, and carried by escalade in our Indian wars.

Exposure to sultry suns; long marches; the endurance of fatigue, thirst, and hunger, and the experience of hard fighting, — these things make honourable veterans; and all Englishmen, who served in India from the year 1780 to 1804, had their full share of such hardships, and have large titles to honour.

We have now to relate an interesting struggle, and shall give the stories of the war of Mysore, and that in the Deccan, with a brief, plain fidelity.

When the marquis Wellesley arrived in India to succeed lord Teignmouth in the government of that country, he found the British interests menaced by the secret designs of many enemies. The most formidable and inveterate of these was the sultan Tippoo, ruler of Mysore. He had entered into secret correspondence with the French; had sent ambassadors to the local government in the Isle of France; and, by them, letters to be forwarded to the executive directory in Europe. Both by his envoys and his letters he invited the alliance of the French government, and their aid in officers and men, having projected, as he told them, a war with the English, which he only awaited their assistance to commence: at the same time he declared to them that his object was to drive the English out of India.

It was also known that he had sent accredited agents to the court of Zemaun Shah, king of Cabul and Candahar, prompting him to invade our territories from the north:—moreover, he was suspected of an intrigue with the Mahrattas, whom he was inviting to make common cause against the British.

The state of our alliances in the Deccan was apparently desperate: French influence was paramount at the court of the nizam. The court of the peishwah* at Poonah was at the mercy of Scindia, who

* The considered head of the Mahratta powers, and the real sovereign of the Poonah state, though nominally only the chief minister of the rajah of Sattara, a mere cipher.

lay near with an army, and dictated all its measures. French officers possessed the ear of Scindiah. The rajah of Berar was known to be secretly hostile to the English; and the adventurous chief, Holkar, always ready for war and plunder, would not be slow to join the league.

A proclamation issued by the governor of the Isle of France reached Bengal early in June, 1798. No sooner was this made known, than the Carnatic, alarmed and despondent, began to dread immediate invasion, and a renewal of all those horrors of which she had before tasted the bitterness and misery. The fourth paragraph of this proclamation distinctly stated, that Tippoo only awaited the moment, when the French should come to his assistance, to declare war against the English,—all of whom he ardently desired to expel from India.

The authenticity of this document was at first doubted; but was soon confirmed by good testimony, and by the fact, that a French vessel arrived at Mangalore on the coast of Malabar, and landed one hundred men and several officers for the service of Tippoo, by whom they were instantly received.

The marquis Wellesley immediately decided upon a war; but, until his measures of preparation were complete, he delayed the open declaration. He ordered the armies of Coromandel and Malabar to be immediately assembled; but so bad and inefficient was the state of the former, that this could not, at the moment, be done.

To improve and strengthen our alliance with the nizam was the next object. This prince had a corps of fourteen thousand men in his service, com-

manded by French officers. These officers had acquired an ascendency so considerable at his court, that his nominal alliance was, to us, not only useless but dangerous. Marquis Wellesley boldly and without delay negotiated for the augmentation of the British force at Hyderabad, and for the dismissal of the French officers serving with the nizam. These great objects were most happily attained. By a new treaty an addition was made to the British subsidiary force of 4400 men. To fulfil these engagements at once, troops, which had been held in secret preparation, were assembled by general Harris with such promptitude, that, although the treaty was only ratified at Fort William on the 18th of September, our troops reached Hyderabad on the 10th of October, and, assisted by the cavalry of the Nizam, they surrounded the French force on the 22d, disarmed the sepoys, and arrested the European officers. All this was effected without bloodshed. A mutiny against their officers had broken out in the French camp; a state of things which, of course, prevented any effectual resistance. The body disarmed was about 11,000 men. Captain James Kirkpatrick, the resident, captain John Malcolm, and colonel Roberts, conducted this affair, in their various relations, with great address and uncommon firmness. The zeal and courage of captain Malcolm were, from circumstances, most conspicuous. This master-stroke of policy was hailed by the British at both presidencies as an augury of a good and vigorous administration.

The marquis now came to Fort St. George to advance the preparations for war by his presence. As

soon as all things were ready, he addressed a remonstrance to Tippoo Sultan on his late conduct. This not being replied to, he directed the advance of the army on the 3d of February. On the 13th there came a short, unsatisfactory letter from Tippoo; his reply to which Lord Wellesley dated on the 22d, affixing the same date to a declaration of war, which was made in the name of the English and their allies.

It has been argued by some that this war was forced upon Tippoo, and that Lord Wellesley was not justified in these measures. The fact is, it was not war that was forced upon Tippoo, but the time of commencing it. War was already in his heart. He never would, he never could, have rested in amity with us. His attitude of peace was treacherous; it was but the couching of the tiger preparatory to its spring. As the hunters go forth from an Indian village to destroy the terror of their herds, seeking him in his own lair, so the British, that her trembling subjects in the Carnatic might sleep in security, marched to assault this dangerous and dreaded enemy in his own capital.

The preparations for this campaign were made upon a large scale, and manifested the intention of the government to destroy the power of Mysore. As little as possible was left to what is called the fortune of war. It is a sound principle in war, that by taking the field strong, campaigns are rendered short as well as decisive. There is always, therefore, in the end, a saving of treasure, and of what is a million times more valuable, of human life. A principle, by the way, to which in Europe English

ministers have rarely if ever attended. The army of the Carnatic, including the subsidiary force from Hyderabad, and three thousand of the nizam's own infantry, amounted to thirty thousand combatants. Six thousand native horse belonging to the nizam, and not included in the above statement, marched with this army. This cavalry was led by Meer Allum, a general of the nizam's. The charge of colonel Wellesley in this force was considerable: he commanded all the infantry of the nizam, to which his own corps, the 33d, had been attached; and he made this campaign at the head of eleven battalions.

The assembled force encamped upon the frontier of Tippoo's territories on the 4th of March: the day following, general Harris despatched lord Wellesley's letter to the sultan, declared war, and commenced hostilities. His advanced corps of infantry marched upon some hill forts in front: they surrendered without resistance, or were abandoned as the troops approached them.

When the army of the Carnatic passed the eastern frontier of Mysore, that of the western coast, amounting to 6400 men, was also marching upon Seringapatam. This last force had been assembled at Cannanore under general Stuart, and was destined to combine its operations with those of general Harris.

Tippoo's first movement was easterly, as if to oppose the advance of Harris; but he suddenly broke up from his encampment at Seringapatam, and taking with him the flower of his infantry, marched swiftly upon the division coming from Cannanore. He

encamped near them on the 5th. Some of the tents were observed by general Stuart; but from the nature of the country, which is full of jungle, or tall thick underwood, that officer could not ascertain his numbers; neither was he aware that the sultan himself was present in the camp. The disposition of Stuart's force was as follows:—Three native battalions, under colonel Montresor, were posted in advance at Seedaseer. After the appearance of the enemy on the 5th, they were reinforced by another battalion. The rest of the troops, with the park and provisions, were encamped at Seedapoor and Ahmootenar; the first were eight miles, the latter twelve, in rear of this position. The country here is covered with wood, and favourable for concealed movements. Between the hours of nine and ten on the forenoon of the 6th, the enemy, having penetrated the jungle with great secrecy, came suddenly upon the brigade of Montresor, and attacked him in front and rear, at the same moment, with fierce impetuosity.

The assailed battalions, though pressed by superior numbers, behaved with all steadiness, and defended themselves with resolute bravery. It was five hours before general Stuart could arrive to their support; and even then, that division of the enemy, which was in the rear of Montresor, still for half an hour resisted his advance; but at last they gave way, and retired on all sides in confusion. The sultan had more than 11,000 men in action at Seedaseer, and lost about 1500. The brave brigade of Montresor lost only 140 men. This action is worthy of remark, as on both sides the combatants were natives of Hindostan. The sultan remained in his

camp at Periapatam till the 11th, without molesting Montresor or Stuart again, and then marched once more upon the army of the Carnatic. On the 14th of March this army encamped in sight of Bangalore. Four thousand of the enemy's best cavalry came forward to reconnoitre it, and after receiving a few shot from the field-pieces of the advanced guard, drew off quietly. From the neighbourhood of Bangalore, before which fortress he made no delay, three roads lead to Seringapatam: general Harris took the southern, by Kaunkaunhully. The march was tedious in the extreme: his army was five days in accomplishing the same distance traversed by lord Cornwallis with a battering train, eight years before, in two. The equipments, provisions, and stores were not more than sufficient, nor were they, for an Indian army, more cumbrous than usual; but they required large means of transport; and though there was carriage enough to meet the want on the returns, yet was there at the moment some disappointment as to the quantity of bullocks, still more as to their quality, and rate of marching. The evil originated with the native contractors, who, finding themselves, by some new regulations, abridged of their customary and fraudulent gains, impeded the movements in a manner which no prudence could foresee, and no exertion, no anger, no punishment could avail to rectify. The provoking immobility of feature, and the stubborn purpose, which a native of that class exhibits, when gain or revenge is his object, can alone be conceived by those who have witnessed it. The impatient and active spirits on the staff of that army were continually engaged in fruitless en-

deavours to move these sullen contractors. That this vexatious experience, and the insight it gave him into the native character, and commissariat arrangements, were not lost upon colonel Wellesley, his rapid and unimpeded marches in the Deccan, at a subsequent period, abundantly testify; and it is remarkable that the British army has never had a general so minutely attentive to the commissariat department, to his means of transport, his depôts and supplies, as this great commander.

To return. General Harris encamped at Kaunkaunhully on the 21st. The sultan offered no opposition to these movements; he even retired from the strong heights on the eastern bank of the Maddoor river, without disputing the passage. On the 27th, however, general Harris found the enemy halted, and drawn up on the high ground beyond Malavelly. They fired upon the army, and manifested an intention to prevent their encamping. A disposition was, therefore, made to compel them to fight or retire. The 33d regiment, and the troops of the nizam, under colonel Wellesley, formed and advanced upon the left, supported by the regular cavalry under general Floyd. The right moved forward under the more immediate direction of general Harris. The pickets of the army were for a time considerably annoyed by the rockets of the enemy, and their canonnade; but as soon as the formations were completed, their fire was answered by such field-pieces as could be brought up; the line advanced; the affair became general along the whole front, and they were driven from the field. In this engagement some of the sultan's troops manifested great courage. Two thousand of

the best trained of his turbaned infantry advanced firmly upon the British 33d, and came within sixty paces before delivering their fire. The 33d, led by colonel Wellesley, charged these Cushoons, and overthrew them with the bayonet. The horses of general Floyd were soon amidst their broken ranks, and they fell fast before the sabres of his men, whose red horse-hair plumes shook over them fierce and pitiless.*

General Harris crossed the Cauvery at Sosilay, where there is an easy ford: this movement was unexpected by the sultan, and was effected without loss or interruption. On the 2d of April, Tippoo reconnoitred the British for some hours while taking up their ground from a hill in their front, and on the 4th he had again a full view of the whole line as it passed along the high grounds about four miles from his capital.

On the 5th of April the army finally took up its position before Seringapatam for the siege. The camp was formed opposite the west face of the fort, at the distance of 3500 yards. The right was on commanding ground,— the left flank was doubly secured by an aqueduct and the river Cauvery. This aqueduct served in many places, in its winding course, as a strong intrenchment, and several deep and difficult ravines in the rear of the encampment

* The British dragoons in India, at that period, were of the bravest; but the habit of encountering men who gave no quarter caused them to be savage in the hot moment of the *mêlée*. Their helmets were surmounted by thick plumes of red horse-hair which fell over their right cheeks, and gave them a stern look.

gave it protection from any sudden irruptions of the enemy's enterprising horse. This pleasant camp was strong, secure, and abundantly supplied with fine water; in addition to these advantages, there were in the lines five large topes: the feathery cocoa, and the tall and slender areca, and thick clusters of the graceful bamboo, adorned them. But the advantage here was not their beauty or their shade: they furnished those materials for carrying on the works which have generally to be fetched with much labour, and, if an enemy be strong in cavalry, with much interruption from a distance.

The position, however, was found to be in part exposed to some little annoyance from the enemy's advanced posts, especially from their rocket men. An attack was directed upon two of these posts the same night, under colonels Wellesley and Shaw: it failed; colonel Shaw, indeed, got possession of a ruined village, and, sheltered by the cover of its walls, was enabled to hold it throughout the night. The column of colonel Wellesley, when it entered the tope on which it was directed, was suddenly assailed by a hot fire of musketry and rockets: it was thrown into confusion and withdrawn. Such is the frequent fate of a night-attack, in which, if the assailants do not actually surprise the foe, and create a panic, however brave the men, however able the leader, without a certain and confident knowledge of the ground, and light enough to distinguish both it and their opponents, they are moving they know not where, and fighting they know not what. The uncertain footing of a mere walk in the dark upon strange ground belongs to every man's experience.

The following day general Harris made fuller dispositions with a view to drive in the whole line of the enemy's outposts. He directed three simultaneous attacks on their right flank, their left, and their centre, and these attacks were to be made under cover of guns previously posted; moreover, the attacking columns were stronger. Colonel Wellesley again commanded the attack upon the Sultan-pettah tope, and it was carried with skill and resolution.

The attacks of colonel Wallace on the right, and colonel Shaw on the left, were alike successful. These assaults secured a connected line of posts within 1800 yards of the fort, extending two miles in length, from the river on the left to the village of Sultanpet on the right.

CHAP. III.

SIEGE OF SERINGAPATAM. — THE STORM AND CAPTURE. — COLONEL WELLESLEY APPOINTED GOVERNOR.

The fort or city of Seringapatam is situated on a small island formed by the river Cauvery, which breaking against the rocky bank disparts its stream into separate but wide channels: the waters flow sluggishly along, till they meet about three miles below.

The city is built at the upper end, and the arms of the river at that point embrace the walls. The island has a naked, dreary appearance, and is about a mile in width below the city. The place is fortified in the old Indian fashion. Obstacles are clumsily multiplied, and, especially at the south-west angle, wall rises above wall in complicated obstruction. Many of the bastions are square, but there are a few of the regular European form; they are connected, however, by walls, long, lofty, and straight, after the manner of the Hindoos. The north-western angle was that selected by the general as the point of attack: the river at that season was low, its bed wide, and filled with rocks and fragments of granite.

The Bombay army, under Stuart from the western coast, and general Floyd, who had been detached with the cavalry to cover their advance, joined on the 14th. The sultan's horse had hovered close and constantly upon their line of march, and been very active in their annoyance. The progress of the works was now rapid: on the 17th the Bombay troops were established and well covered within

a thousand yards of the western angle of the fort; and the bed of a watercourse on the southern side, within a like distance, was seized at the same moment.

On the 20th, in the evening, the enemy was dislodged from an advanced intrenchment with considerable loss, and a parallel was opened on the spot within seven hundred and eighty yards of the fort.

On the 22d a column of 6000 infantry, with Lally's corps of Frenchmen, made a furious sally upon the Bombay army: they were received with steadiness; and after many times repeating their fierce efforts, were compelled to retire with the loss of six or seven hundred men.

On the evening of the 26th some intrenchments of the enemy behind the bank of a watercourse within 380 yards of the place were assaulted and carried. Of these attacks colonel Wellesley, who commanded in the trenches, had the immediate direction. Their success was rendered complete by the spirited and timely support of colonel Campbell. The fighting was obstinate, and our loss considerable.

On the morning of the 30th a breaching battery opened on the bastion; at sunrise on the 2d of May another battery opened upon the curtain to its right; these and the supporting batteries kept up a loud thunder, and beat weightily upon the walls. A magazine of rockets* blew up in the fort, and threw its

* A city in India besieged presents night after night a sublime spectacle to the besiegers, from the large and frequent use made by Indians of blue lights and other fireworks, besides rockets which are thrown in great quantities, and are very troublesome and destructive.

ruinous and terrific firework far up into the war-clouded sky; salvo upon salvo lodged ponderous shot upon the shaken walls. A practicable breach was soon made in the *fausse braye* wall, and on the evening of the third the main rampart was a heap, and a yawning ruin. Scaling ladders, fascines, and other *materiel* for the assault, were sent to the trenches after sunset the same evening. When the sun rose on the morrow, the brave battalions destined for the storm were already concealed in the trenches.

Two thousand five hundred Europeans and one thousand eight hundred natives were appointed to this service under major-general Baird. The hour for the assault was well chosen; it was that sultry hour of early afternoon, which is throughout the East a season of profound repose; when lassitude is felt in all its enervating power; when, after the meal at noon, all natives compose themselves to sleep or rest. Hot, panting, breathless for the signal, men from the far north and west, that had left their thresholds at home fair flaxen-headed youths, lay by their native comrades looking up to the fierce sun, and well nigh as swart as they.

The sleepy silence which hung over the city, and the awful stillness in the trenches, were suddenly broken by the voice of Baird: — "Come, my brave fellows! follow me, and prove yourselves worthy of the name of British soldiers," was the brief appeal, with which, springing out of the trenches, sword in hand, he summoned the bold men to the overthrow of a kingdom. He was answered by the quick and forward rush of the "forlorn hope" as they broke past him; and was close followed by the columns

under colonels Sherbrooke and Dunlop. The summit of the breach, after a short struggle on the slope with a few gallant Mysoreans, who started out on the instant, was crowned in six minutes; a British colour was there displayed by the brave serjeant* of the "forlorn," who, as he gave the shout of triumph, and felt the hot throb of honours already won, fell dead by a shot from within the fort.

The face of the wide breach was soon crowded with men; and when collected in sufficient force to enter upon the rampart, they filed off to the right and left, driving the enemy before them, who fled, particularly on the right, with unresisting panic.† Numbers threw down their arms and rushed out of the fort. One body of fugitives effected their escape by lowering themselves with the long folds of their unrolled turbans, from the lofty wall at the south-western angle; but of these the more inactive and irresolute were dashed to pieces upon the rocky bottom of the ditch. Upon the left, however, the column of colonel Dunlop, who had himself been wounded in a personal conflict with one of Tippoo's sirdars, on the slope of the breach, was vigorously opposed. The enemy took post behind the traverses which they had constructed, and defended them, one after the other, with such resolution as frequently to bring our front to a stand.

* His name was Graham.

† A captain Molle of the Scotch Brigade pursued them with such ardour that, unsupported, he gained a cavalier, and raising his hat on his sword summoned his men to take possession of it.

Nor would this difficulty have been easily surmounted, had the detachment of the 12th regiment, British, failed in passing the ditch between the exterior and inner rampart. A narrow strip of ground left for the passage of the workmen was by happy chance discovered; the rampart was climbed; the detachment advanced along it, flanked these formidable traverses, and cleared them by their fire. In this quarter the sultan himself had hitherto fought in person, firing from behind a traverse like a common soldier, his attendants aver with such steadiness and effect, that he brought down many of the assailants.

But when on all sides the English were gaining ground; when those of the right attack were seen in their crimson uniforms, over the eastern gate; when on all the works the dismayed Mysoreans were resigning the contest, and abandoning their posts, Tippoo retired along the northern rampart.

Coming up with one of his horses he mounted, complaining of fatigue, and of the aching of a leg, in which he had been formerly wounded. He now rode slowly, with what object none can tell, not away, out of the city, as he might have done, but to a bridge that crossed the inner ditch, and led by a covered gateway into the town. As he was entering this gateway he received a wound from a musket ball. The place was soon filled with fugitives, both from without and within; for on both sides the British were now advancing. The archway was so choked with people that he could not pass through the crowd; and the cross-fire of the conquerors soon made it a heap of the dead and the dying. His horse sunk under him, wounded; his

palanquin was at hand, and his attendants disengaged him from the saddle, and placed him upon it. This was their last service — removal was impossible. In a few minutes English soldiers pressed into the gateway. One of them, attracted by the glittering of the golden buckle, snatched at the sultan's sword-belt. Tippoo, with such strength as yet remained to him, made a cut at the soldier, and wounded him in the knee. The man drew back, raised his piece, and shot the sultan deliberately through the temple, little knowing that it was the stern unyielding king, who fell back upon the litter dead. In the hot search for plunder, the body was thrown out of the palanquin, and lay hidden for a time beneath a heap of slain. While Tippoo, in the consciousness that his kingdom was departed from him, provoked the fate he probably desired, all was alarm and terror in the palace. Baird, who had been formerly, for three years, the fettered and captive tenant of a loathsome hovel in this very city, now stood before the palace gates as a victor.

After some anxious parley between major Allan and the killedar, the palace, which was crowded with armed men, surrendered; the gates were opened, and the youthful princes* were led to the presence of the injured conqueror. They came trembling: they knew his story; they knew his wrongs; and they knew that Europeans taken during the siege had been murdered in torture by their father: but as they drew near, and met the eyes of Baird, that brave man was sensibly affected

* They were youths of seventeen and fifteen.

at the sight; his violent and excited anger was suddenly resolved into the generous emotions of a fatherly pity; he calmed their fears, and dismissed them with expressions of regard and promises of protection.

From the information gathered at the palace, Baird proceeded instantly to the northern gateway in search of the sultan. The shadowy arch was filled with slain; and from the dim obscurity of the place the features of the dusky dead could not easily be distinguished. Body after body was dragged out and examined without success. Torches were now lighted, and they went in to carry on the search with better expedition: the corpse was at last found beneath a heap of the killed, and recognised by many. Turban, jacket, sword, and belt were gone; of defence or ornament nothing remained to the king; still, however, bound upon his right arm, was the trusted amulet* which he always wore. Despite three wounds in the body, and one in the temple, the countenance was not distorted, and it wore an expression of stern composure. The eyes were open, and the body so warm, that, as colonel Wellesley, then present, and major Allan, felt it, they thought, for a minute, that the sultan yet lived; but it was not so. They felt the pulse again, and it was still: the haughty heart and it had ceased to beat.

* The talisman contained, sewed up in pieces of fine-flowered silk, an amulet of a brittle metallic substance, of the colour of silver, and some manuscripts in magic, Arabic, and Persian characters, the purport of which, had there been any doubt, would have fully ascertained the identity of the sultan's body. —Beatson.

Above eight thousand of his troops had fallen. The carnage in and around the principal mosque was very great; for here was the last deadly and desperate resistance of the true mussulmans, who would neither fly nor surrender. All violence ceased with the conflict; and, in comparison with captures by assault generally, few, very few, of the inhabitants suffered. Such females as had not fled the city, gathered in veiled and trembling groups in the open spaces, and found their best protection in this defenceless and pitied exposure. On the morning of the 5th of May, colonel Wellesley was appointed to the permanent command of Seringapatam. In the attack, he had been in charge of the reserve, and was only an eager and animated spectator of the storm. The rank, the reputation, the age of Baird, and, above all, the peculiar circumstance of his long captivity in the dungeons of this very city, gave him a right to the honour of leading the assault; and the impatient victor, in the furious battle of Assaye, had but to see this conflict, and to hear the shouts of the conquerors. His immediate attention on the morning of the 5th was directed to the re-establishment of order and security. He made a few necessary examples of plunderers; went in person to the houses of the principal inhabitants, and soon inspired a general confidence in the people. Such as had fled away to the open fields returned; and three days after the capture, the main street and the bazaar were crowded with a busy population, and presented the appearance of a fair.

On the evening of the capture, the remains of Tippoo were conveyed to the palace. On the morn-

ing after, Abdul Khalik, his second son, came in and surrendered himself: he asked to see the body, but viewed it with apparent unconcern. Not so the younger princes; they displayed a feeling and lively sorrow. Youth is youth, and father has still a cherished place in the breast and heart of boyhood, whatever be the country, how troubled soever be the scene. Tippoo was buried with the usual ceremonies, and with as much of pomp as circumstances admitted; all these things being cared for and provided, with the utmost delicacy and judgment, by colonel Wellesley himself, as commandant of the city. Four flank companies of Europeans attended as a guard of honour; and minute guns were fired during the interment. As the procession passed through the street, a *keeraut*, or charitable donation of five thousand rupees, was distributed to the fakirs and the poor. The *kauzee* chanted the usual verses from the koran, and the attendants gave the loud response. The streets were lined with inhabitants, and many persons prostrated themselves before the bier. Thus Tippoo was laid in the tomb of a king, and with the body of his father. He was brave; and he died a soldier's death. He was a favourite with all classes, during the lifetime of his father, but his reign disappointed all expectations. Nevertheless, in the sight of his mussulman subjects, he had many redeeming qualities; nor did they attribute to him, but to his minister, Meer Sadduck, the oppression which they endured. This they marked by the cruel, indecent, and foul indignities with which they treated the naked corpse of Meer Sadduck, who was killed during the assault, it is believed, by the Mysoreans themselves. Tippoo

was generous, though capricious, and supported an immense number of dependants. "These people are fed by God," he would say, "not by me;" and he would never hear of any reductions in his establishment which might dismiss superfluous servants to destitution. He was strict in all observances of his religion; and his edicts against the offences prohibited by the law of the prophet, especially that against the use of wine, were severe and inflexible. He was a despiser of all Europeans, even of those whom he employed. He was a persecutor of all infidels, of the Nazarene in particular. Yet it is recorded of him that, on the very day on which he met his death, he made large oblations* to the brahmin priests, and performed ceremonies by them enjoined to avert misfortune. These priests had apprised him that the 4th of May would prove an inauspicious day to him; and whatever prompted the strange augury, it was, though with little of mystery or wonder, fulfilled. When he sent to them his offerings, he asked their prayers. Such was the fear with which this intrepid warrior regarded the approach of misfortune, or, perhaps, the terrible law

* To the Shinassee of Chenapatam he gave an elephant, a bag of oil seeds (of the sort named *teel*), and two hundred rupees. To different brahmins he gave a black bullock, a milch buffalo, a male buffalo, a black she-goat, a jacket of coarse black cloth, a cap of the same material, ninety rupees, and previous to the delivery of this last article he held his head over the pot, for the purpose of seeing the image of his face; a ceremony used in Hindostan to avert misfortune. He then dismissed the brahmins, and desired they would pray for the prosperity of his government, which was the more remarkable, the sultan being a bigotted mahometan.—Beatson.

of death. Such was his doubt of that providence and mercy in which, as a good mussulman, he affected to place a simple and implicit reliance.

Notwithstanding all the predictions of the priests, and his own misgivings about the last event and issue of the war, the storm of Seringapatam he never contemplated for one moment; and on the morning of the day when it was made, he could not, to the last, be made to believe that it was intended. He was at dinner, sitting under a pandal *, near an old gateway, in the northern face, when the alarm was given. He hastily washed his hands, and called for his arms. While buckling on his sword, a messenger came running to tell him, that Syed Goffar, his best officer, was killed.

"Syed Goffar was never afraid of death," was his first and only exclamation: "let Mahommed Cassim take charge of his division." And with these words he went hastily forth to meet the assault. The fortunes and the character of this prince are of sufficient interest to have demanded this long notice.

As soon as it could be conveniently arranged, the commissioners, appointed by the governor-general, assembled in Seringapatam. Colonel Wellesley was a member of this commission. Their first proceeding was to grant life-pensions to the chief sirdars of Tippoo's army who had survived the struggle. This measure of conciliation being effected, their next was to remove from the country the families of Hyder Ali and the late sultan, as a preliminary

* A thatched shed.

to the new settlement of Mysore. The details of this delicate office were left to colonel Wellesley; and, by various concurring testimonies, the duty was performed with great judgment, and the most considerate humanity.

It was resolved by the marquis Wellesley to restore the ancient rajahship of Mysore. He apportioned for it a larger territory and a better revenue than the former rajahs had ever possessed. The remainder of Tippoo's kingdom, being the after-conquest of his father, was divided between the English and the nizam; a portion being reserved as an offering to the peishwah, with a view of cementing our alliances in that quarter. The child, who was the lineal descendant of the ancient rajahs of Mysore, was discovered, with his fallen family, in deep poverty and humiliation. His state excited a most compassionate interest in those first deputed to communicate the intended elevation. The commissioners were received by the young rajah in the mean apartment of a mean abode. He was surrounded by his male relations; while the ranah and the females of his house were only concealed from the visitors by a sorry cloth or curtain: every thing marked the extreme of indigence and neglected obscurity.

The young prince, a delicate and timid child, about five years old, was at first alarmed; but the kindness of the commissioners soon re-assured him.

The brahmins fixed upon the 30th of June as an auspicious day for the enthronement. The inauguration took place in the old town of Mysore. The ancient Hindoo musnud had been discovered

at Seringapatam, and was used upon this occasion. Under a royal salute from the fort, and three vollies from the troops, the young rajah, conducted by general Harris and Meer Allum, took seat upon the throne of his fathers, received their homage, and was presented in due form with the seal and signet of the *rauje*. The deportment of the child, throughout this imposing ceremony, was so becoming, so free from all restraint and embarrassment, as to surprise and interest all the British officers who were present. Tippoo had always designated the state as *Khodadad Sircar*, i.e. "The Government, God given;" or, "The Gift of God." The designation, though mahometan, and no longer used, struck many as singularly applicable to the advancement of the young rajah; for he had literally lain among the pots *, and was now set up as a prince of the people. The brahmin Purneah, who had been the finance minister of Tippoo, accepted an offer to become the dewan of the present government, and was appointed accordingly. Thus happily was this important conquest settled. †

* There was a potter's heap close to his late wretched abode; moreover, strange as it may sound, the young prince and his family were originally of the potter cast, which, though not vile, is by no means a high one.

† The garrison of Seringapatam during the siege was near 22,000. Two hundred and eighty-seven guns were mounted on the fortifications, and nearly 700 pieces of ordnance were found in the four arsenals; there were also in the city two founderies for cannon, and eleven armories for small arms. The British loss during the siege and in the assault was about 1400 killed and wounded, of whom 67 were officers.

It is impossible to close the story of this war without remarking two things:—first, that, contrary to all reasonable expectation, the British army was compelled rather to creep than to march to the scene of its after-triumphs. Next, that, if in consequence of this delay Seringapatam had been defended as it might and ought to have been, and as there was reason to expect from the character of Tippoo, the number of his troops, and the abundance of its *materiel*, it would have been, the siege must have been tedious and harassing, and the success doubtful. Nay, had the breach been cut off by a retrenchment, and defended with as much spirit as the traverses on the left, it would certainly not have been carried as it was; because an obstacle would have been presented insurmountable by the brave assailants.

Before and throughout the siege the mind of Tippoo was confused, and his heart depressed by the shadow of a coming calamity. On the evening of his funeral the sky gathered black with clouds. There was a great tempest, thunder and lightning, and so heavy a rain that the river Cauvery rose greatly in the course of one night; and this change of weather would, of itself, have greatly interfered with our operations, had we been still in the trenches. In the camp of the Bombay army two British officers were killed, that evening, by the lightning.

All here related, and much more, was witnessed by colonel Wellesley, and forms a part of his military experience as a soldier, and his moral experience as a man.

He now became the permanent commandant of

Seringapatam, and in that office was, of necessity, charged with many duties, and various arrangements, of a nature totally distinct from the ordinary routine of mere military service. To these new duties he rose in a manner that gained him much influence and increasing respect.

It is remembered, that he early prepared a paper upon the state of the coinage in Mysore, in which it was shown that he had studied the subject, and was not less able to project a measure of finance in the closet than to guide a column in the field. To this hour, indeed, the memory of all these services, and more particularly of those which he rendered to the terrified and desolate natives in the moment of our triumph, and their distress, is cherished by the aged inhabitants of Seringapatam with a grateful feeling, with which we are unwilling to disconnect the after-successes of colonel Wellesley's life.

CHAP. IV.

COLONEL WELLESLEY'S SERVICE AGAINST DHOONDIA, A LEADER OF PREDATORY HORSE. — IS PROMOTED TO THE RANK OF GENERAL. — TAKES THE FIELD AGAINST THE MAHRATTAS. — VARIOUS OPERATIONS. — THE BATTLE OF ASSAYE. — PEACE. — LEAVES INDIA.

THE tranquillity of the new conquests, and the quiet submission of the country, was for awhile delayed by the enterprise of an adventurer, named Dhoondia Waugh.

This individual, born in the kingdom of Mysore, of Mahratta parents, had been a private horseman in the cavalry of Hyder, and served afterwards in the army of his son with some petty command. Being a restless, ambitious man, and disappointed of promotion to the extent of his hopes, he deserted the sultan's service, during the war with lord Cornwallis, and, putting himself at the head of a few predatory horse, he plundered the country north of the Toombudra. His maraud, however, was checked and chastised by the court of Poonah, whose troops, under their chief Ghokla, overtook and defeated him. Induced by a fair offer of Tippoo, who promised both forgiveness and employment, he returned to Mysore, at the head of two hundred followers. The treacherous sultan immediately threw him into prison, and invited him to turn mussulman. Whether this was to secure his allegiance, or to increase the

number of the faithful, may not be confidently said; but the tyrant circumcised his Hindoo prisoner by force, and subjected him to very cruel and rigorous treatment throughout a long confinement. At the capture of Seringapatam, among the prisoners hastily set at liberty, without due examination and enquiry, was Dhoondia Waugh. No sooner were his fetters knocked off than his feet were again in the stirrups. Many of Tippoo's horsemen, men of desperate fortunes, without a country, a service, or a master, became his willing followers. With these people he ravaged the rich country of Biddenore; and it became necessary to send after him two strong detachments of the army, under colonels Stevenson and Dalrymple. Six hundred and fifty of his followers, horse and foot, were cut up by lieutenant-colonel Dalrymple; by whom, and by colonel Stevenson, he was soon driven across the Toombudra, into the territory of the peishwah. Here his old conqueror Ghokla came upon him, and being stripped of guns, tents, and baggage, elephants and bullocks, he fled north, with the very few horse which, after this last dispersion, remained to him, and for a time totally disappeared.

Nothing is more remarkable in India than the magic growth of a predatory force. A single adventurer, with no purse, no possession, but horse and sword, if he has once rode at the head of a body of freebooters, and got a name for activity and fortune, is sure to be sought out and followed by all whose feet are "swift to shed blood, and to divide the spoil." The speck, scarce visible or noticed in

the far distance, approaches; and, behold, a heavy cloud black with the menace of destruction. Thus, in 1800, Dhoondia rode south again with 5000 horse, and threatened the frontier of Mysore. Against this enemy a force was immediately ordered to take the field, and colonel Wellesley was appointed to the command. The colonel crossed the Toombudra with his troops on the 24th of June; another body under colonel Bowser marched upon the same service, to co-operate with and under him. On the 29th, from intelligence he received, colonel Wellesley found that if he halted for colonel Bowser he might lose the chance of striking such a blow at Dhoondia as would cripple him. He therefore pressed forward with his cavalry only. At Malowny on the Malpoorba he found a detached camp of this chieftain; rode into it; cut up or drove into the river all the combatants he found there; took animals, baggage, &c., and closed the affair by making a party of his European dragoons swim across the river and seize a boat. By this means he contrived the same evening to possess himself of their guns, which had been safely transported to the opposite bank before his arrival. After various forced and fatiguing marches, and many able movements conducted with persevering activity and judgment, colonel Wellesley found himself within a few miles of Dhoondia's main force on the night of the 9th of September. Bad weather and jaded horses compelled him to a short halt. Luckily, the chief, misled by the previous manœuvres of Wellesley, and misinformed by his spies, was ignorant of the near approach of the British troops. After a night of anxious impatience, colonel Wel-

lesley bade sound "To horse!" rode forward with his eager squadrons, and soon came in presence of "the king of the two worlds."* His army consisting of at least 5000 cavalry, for he had been strengthened since his arrival in the south, was drawn up in a very strong position near the village of Conagull. His people put on a good bold countenance, and looked firm. The colonel most rapidly formed the British dragoons and native cavalry; and in one resolute charge, led by himself, the fate of this lawless horde was decided. They were cut up or dispersed, every thing in their camp taken, and Dhoondia himself, "king of the two worlds," was slain. His body was recognised among the dead: it was immediately lashed upon one of the galloper guns attached to the 19th light dragoons, and brought by the soldiers, with no small exultation, to the English camp. It is impossible to read the letters to sir Thomas (then major) Munro, lately published in the correspondence of that able and esteemed man, in which colonel Wellesley describes these operations, without the liveliest interest. The pursuit and overthrow of this formidable freebooter are related with a flow of joyous good humour like the story of a successful hunt; and the phrases, the "king of the world" and "his majesty" are repeated with a playfulness, which shows the extreme pleasure Wellesley felt at his success, and the utter insignificance in which he held the peril or the glory of such a combat. At the same time it will be seen how much of

* An assumed title. It is thus in the history of India that any bold adventurer founds a dynasty.

thought and foresight; what clear arrangements for supply; what prompt decision on routes; what skill in movement; what unwearied perseverance, were exhibited in the effectual performance of this service. With colonel Wellesley duty was never a trifle. It mattered not how small or great the object to be attained. He gave to all orders that he received his fixed intelligent attention; and to the execution of them, for the time being, all his mind.

Let the youthful officer consider well this feature in the character we place before him. He will find it distinctive of the whole career of Wellesley.

The service just performed was of considerable importance, and checked in time the growth of a vast horde of pindarries, and other great disorders. Thus was tranquillity again restored to the territories lately acquired by the British and also to many fertile districts immediately beyond their frontier. The peaceful peasants could again sow and irrigate their pleasant fields in security; and, in "the places of drawing water," the timid women of the Indian villages were again delivered from their fear.

Shortly after this service, colonel Wellesley was appointed to accompany general Baird on an expedition projected by the marquis Wellesley against Batavia, and he quitted his command in the Mysore. This expedition, owing to some misunderstanding between the admiral commanding in the Indian seas and the governor-general, as to the extent of the power which the latter was authorised to assume, was abandoned by the marquis The force under general Baird was ordered to Egypt, and

colonel Wellesley was remanded to the government of Seringapatam.

It seems to have been the intention at home that colonel Wellesley should have proceeded to Egypt with the contingent furnished by the Indian army; for he was actually gazetted to the local rank of a brigadier-general in that country. A scene, however, of very active and important operations was just about to open upon his prospects in India; and, with a separate and independent command, he soon gave to the name of Wellesley that splendour which did ever after increase, till at last it shone out, effulgent in meridian glory, over the field of Waterloo.

It may readily be supposed that the Mahratta chiefs had viewed the late successes of the British in Mysore with an evil eye. In the policy which had suggested the destruction of Tippoo's kingdom, and in the power which that prompt, vigorous, and decisive measure had exhibited, they saw, or suspected, the danger of their own states. The British government, desirous to establish such an alliance with the peishwah as might preserve the general tranquillity, made offer to that prince of a portion of the territories conquered from Tippoo, and such other proposals as indicated a sincere desire to preserve with that court relations of the most strict amity. The territory was refused, and the proposals were rejected. The secret of this refusal lay in the simple fact, that Scindia, with a large army, and almost the whole of his French brigades, continued at Poonah, and controlled every action of the court.

In June, 1802, intelligence of the peace of

Amiens reached India, which was thus re-opened to French adventurers and French intrigue. Fortunately, at this very moment, the two chiefs, Scindia and Holkar, were at variance. The latter, a fierce man, always in his element when in the work of devastation, was laying waste the country of the other; that part of it, at least, which lies north of the Nerbuddah. If, however, as was probable, Scindia should obtain, by the defeat of his rival, the sole ascendency in the Mahratta empire, the English foresaw that the weight of its military resources would assuredly, sooner or later, be directed against themselves. There could be little doubt, from the constitution of his army, and from the influence of his French officers, that he might, and would, establish a military power in the heart of India, by which the very existence of the British government in the East would be endangered. The country of the peishwah had been now the scene of continual conflict for years, and was greatly exhausted by the constant influx of fresh and hungry hordes of horse, who came to fight, under one banner or another, for the sovereignty of the Mahratta empire. It was evident that these lawless crowds, if not impelled by their natural thirst for plunder, must soon be driven to invade our territories, or those of the nizam, our ally, from the mere want of food.

In the autumn of 1802, Holkar came down upon Poonah in great strength, and compelled Scindia to battle. The peishwah was under an obligation to join Scindia with his troops, and promised, moreover, his personal presence in the field. On the

day of battle he mounted his elephant, indeed, and took seat in his war howdah; but nothing was further from his intention than risking his person among the spearmen of Holkar. He therefore lingered near the walls of the city, ready alike for flight or congratulation. Holkar won the day, and, upon the very earliest report from the scene of conflict, which showed clearly to which side victory inclined, the peishwah, whose cunning was as notorious as his cowardice, fled away. He proceeded to Bassein, in Guzerat, and here very readily concluded a treaty with the British; whereby he consented to receive a subsidiary force, to cede territory for its subsistence, and to discharge all French and foreign adventurers from his service. The Madras army, under the command of general Stuart, advanced to the banks of the Toombudra to support this treaty. Colonel Wellesley, in the spring of 1802, had been promoted to the rank of major-general; and in that rank he now again took the field. He was, upon this occasion, detached with a select corps in front of general Stuart, and directed to march on Poonah, to drive away the troops of Holkar, and make safe the return of the peishwah, who was already on his way again to take possession of his capital. In co-operation with the subsidiary force of the Deccan, which moved under the orders of colonel Stevenson, he advanced rapidly. On his route, intelligence reached him that Amrat Rao, a relation of Holkar, and a chief, had threatened to plunder the city before he departed north. General Wellesley, with that promptitude and perseverance which have

always marked his discharge of duty, broke up instantly, performed a march of sixty miles in thirty hours, entered Poonah with his cavalry on the 20th of April: the Mahrattas fled at his approach, and the city was saved. The climate and season considered, this was a prodigious exertion for the European part of his force; indeed, for all. It is remarkable, however, but true, that, for a brief campaign, the Europeans in India, from their pride and energy, and from a certain vigour of original constitution, will endure hardship, exposure to the sun, and fatigue, better than the majority of the natives; but, afterwards, alas! they pay the heavy price of their exertions. When the moral excitement has passed away, they often sink into supineness; disease invades them, and the gallant fellows wither into yellow and bloodless men; and, while yet scarce at mid-age themselves, so die. It is well to mark these things; for thousands upon thousands of soldiers, in all armies and in all countries, sink down into early graves, which their own services have dug, without the eclat of battle, — without one leaf of laurel to mingle with the unwelcome cypress.

Happily the noble subject of these memoirs was gifted with a frame well calculated for the sustaining of all fatigues, and a sound, vigorous constitution. General Wellesley was a little above the middle height, well limbed, and muscular; with little incumbrance of flesh beyond that which gives shape and manliness to the outline of the figure; with a firm tread; an erect carriage; a countenance strongly patrician, both in feature, profile, and

expression; and an appearance remarkable and distinguished: few could approach him on any duty, or on any subject requiring his serious attention, without being sensible of a something strange and penetrating in his clear light eye. Nothing could be more simple and straightforward than the matter of what he uttered; nor did he ever in his life affect any peculiarity or pomp of manner, or rise to any coarse, weak loudness in his tone of voice. It was not so that he gave expression to excited feeling.

It may be here with propriety observed, and it is important to the younger officers who may read this, that general Wellesley was a man temperate in all his habits; using the table, but above its pleasures: and it is not to be found on record, that he was ever *the slave* of any of those frailties, without an occasional subjection to which few men pass the fiery ordeal of a soldier's life. He was, however, much in camps; and a camp is so truly the nursery of manly virtues, that few officers advanced in life can look back upon days so unoffending, or nights of such light repose, as those passed in the ready field. To sum all up, he was a British nobleman serving his king and country with heart and hand; and while British noblemen continue to do thus, may their lands be broad, their mansions wide, and their names honoured!

The peishwah again entered Poonah, and was again enthroned upon his own musnud, on the 13th of May. The defensive alliance with him having been thus peaceably effected, it was hoped that Scindia

would return quietly to his own country. This hope was vain. Scindia and the rajah of Berar, who were together in the field, made a menacing movement towards the frontier of our ally, the nizam. Explanation of this conduct was immediately demanded: the replies were evasive. Information was just at this time received of a secret and active correspondence between Scindia and Holkar; and it was privately known that a league hostile to the British was on the very eve of being concluded.

Under all these circumstances the marquis Wellesley, with that large and comprehensive wisdom which sees when and where to delegate authority, invested the officers in command of the armies of Hindostan and the Deccan with full civil and political powers; for, in the upper provinces of the Bengal government, as well as in the Deccan, our troops were in the field. The army of Hindostan was commanded by lord Lake.

To major-general Wellesley, however, in particular, was sent a specific authority to conclude peace or to engage in hostilities, as his judgment, guided by his knowledge of the objects of government, might suggest to be most advantageous for the public interests. The major-general immediately demanded of Scindia that he should separate his army from that of the rajah of Berar, and retire across the Nerbuddah. He promised, on his own part, that the British troops should resume their ordinary stations the very moment that this requisition was complied with.

Oriental diplomatists are grand masters in all the little arts of evasion and delay, deceit and falsehood. Seldom, however, was a man born better calculated to deal with such diplomatists than general Wellesley. He saw through them, and had a straightforward method of dealing, and a bold and fearless desision, which at once confused and confounded them.

They continued their professions of good faith, and they repeated proposals already rejected, till it was evident to the general that time enough to perfect their plans and to prepare the hostile combinations was their sole object. The general, with his forces, awaited the issue of the negotiations in a camp near Walkee, no great distance from the city of Ahmednuggur, a strong fort belonging to Scindia, and situate about eighty miles from Poonah. It was on the 6th of August he learned that his political agent, colonel Collins, acting up to the true spirit of his instructions, had quitted the camp of Scindia. There had just been a heavy fall of rain; and, from the state of the roads, which immediately near him lay over soft cotton ground, it was not possible for him to move on the 7th, but on the morning of the 8th he broke up the encampment, and marched to Ahmednuggur. The town, or pettah of this place, is defended by a very lofty wall of masonry, without any ramparts, and flanked at every angle or bend by a tower. This pettah was garrisoned by a regular battalion of Scindia's infantry, supported by a body of those brave mercenaries, the Arabs, who are often found in the

fortresses of the Deccan. A body of horse was encamped immediately behind the town, in the open space between it and the fort. General Wellesley directed the assault of the pettah the very moment he came before it. The place was gallantly carried by escalade, with the loss of 118 killed and wounded. The suffering was principally from the Arabs, who, both on the towers and in the streets, offered a brave but ineffectual resistance. Lieutenant-colonels Harness and Wallace, and captain Vesey, with the flank companies of the 78th, the 74th, and 1st battalion 3d native infantry, performed this service rapidly, and in a daring and dauntless style. On the 10th the general opened a battery against the fort. The killedar proposed to treat, and requested that the fire might cease while the terms were under discussion. The general expressed his readiness to treat, but the guns continued to play upon the fort. On the 11th the killedar sent out vakeels to offer a surrender; but it was not till five in the evening that his hostages arrived in the British camp, nor till that very hour would the general allow his batteries to cease their fire for a moment, save to cool the guns. On the 12th the killedar and a garrison of 1400 men marched out. He was permitted to take away his own private property, and that of the inhabitants was also preserved to them. This fortress secured the communication with Poonah, afforded a safe depôt, and was the centre and the capital of a district yielding 634,000 rupees.

On the 24th general Wellesley crossed the Go-

davery, with the whole of his force, and reached the large and noble city of Aurungabad on the 29th. There are pleasant breaks in the hot toils of marching and campaigning in India, when a place is approached that rewards the gaze, as riding slowly up, dome, cupola, and tall minar rise grandly in the distance;—objects singularly noble and picturesque in themselves, but doubly so with the adjuncts of the palm-tree and feathery cocoa-nut, and that sunset sky, where long dark stripes, of the very blackest purple, divide the deep, the glowing vermilion, after a manner that no painter either could or would dare to copy. These things, and a soowarree *, perhaps, coming on the way with huge elephant, and camels, and long-maned horses, fretting handsome under their weighty housings, and their turbaned riders, and all the historic associations that crowd up to cultivated minds at the sight;—these are the beguilements of Indian marches; and are, after different manners and degrees, delightful alike to the march-worn soldier, and to the thoughtful leader riding in the van.

As soon as the enemy heard of the arrival of general Wellesley at Aurungabad, they moved from Jalna to the southward and eastward, menacing a march upon Hyderabad. The general marching eastward, along the left bank of the Godavery, frustrated their design effectually; and, by the same movement, covered the safe advance of two important convoys coming up from Moodgul. The enemy now returned to the northward of Jalna. Colonel

* A train, the retinue of a great man.

Stevenson attacked and carried that fort on the 2d of September: upon the night of the 9th he surprised a detached encampment of the enemy, created no small disturbance and alarm, and caused them much loss. The confederate chieftains had hitherto been marching solely with their cavalry, supported by a few thousands of the irregular foot, armed with matchlocks. They were now joined by sixteen battalions of regular infantry, and a large train of artillery, under the command of French officers. The whole of these forces were collected at Bokerdun, and lay between that place and Jaffierabad.

On the 21st of September, general Wellesley and colonel Stevenson met and conferred at Budnapoor. They here arranged a combined attack of the enemy for the morning of the 24th. Stevenson was detached by the western route, the general himself taking the eastern; in order that by this division of the force they might be enabled to effect the passage of the defiles in one day, and by occupying both prevent the enemy from escaping to the southward;—a manœuvre by which they might otherwise have avoided the encounter of our army at that time, and, perhaps, altogether. The common hircarrahs of the country reported the enemy to be at Bokerdun; and, according to the information which he had received about roads and distances, the general directed his march, so as to encamp within twelve miles of that place on the 21st. When on the morning of that day he arrived at the proposed halting ground, he learned, to his surprise, that he was only six miles from Bokerdun.

At the same time intelligence was brought, that the cavalry of the Mahratta camp were already in movement to the rear, and that the infantry and guns were preparing to follow. The general determined to march upon the infantry, and engage it. He sent a messenger to Stevenson, then about eight miles to his left, to apprise him of this intention, and to direct his advance.

The camp colours were plucked from the ground, and the little army of Wellesley marched on. With the 19th light dragoons, and three regiments of native cavalry under colonel Maxwell, the general himself advanced to reconnoitre. The infantry followed. After a march of about four miles, from an elevated plain in front of their right he beheld the Mahratta camp. A host of near 50,000 combatants, horse, foot, and artillery, lay strongly posted behind the river Kaitna. A smaller stream, called the Juah, flowed past their rear; and its waters joined those of the Kaitna at a point considerably beyond their left, leaving there a vacant peninsulated piece of ground of some space. The line of the enemy ran east and west along the northern bank of the Kaitna. The infantry lay upon the left, and all the guns. The position of this wing was a little retired upon the Juah, having its *point d'appui* on the village of Assaye, which leaned upon that river. The right consisted entirely of cavalry. The north bank of the Kaitna is high, rocky, and difficult; the front, for the most part, unassailable.

Upon his bay Arabian sat Wellesley, just opposite the enemy's right, then distant about a mile and

a half, and presenting to his view, in one magnificent mass, 30,000 horses. The cavalry under Maxwell formed up their brilliant line, and remained steady. Wellesley with rapid glance surveyed the ground. From beneath the thick plumes of red horse-hair, which drooped over their bronzed cheeks, the manly eyes of the bold 19th dragoons looked on severely. The general resolved for battle. That this was the calm decision of a consulted judgment is not probable; but "there is a tide in the affairs of men:" he felt it swelling in his bosom, and took it at the happy ebb.

A body of the enemy's horse moved out, advanced to within half a mile of the British cavalry, and threw out skirmishers, who fired a few shots. Some British troopers were ordered to drive back these skirmishers, and all again was quiet. The general, observing a spot with a few houses beyond the left of the enemy, where there was probably a ford, and which he saw they had neglected to guard, resolved to pass the Kaitna at that point; to throw his small force entire upon that flank; to attack their infantry and guns; and thus to neutralise the presence of their vast cavalry, or compel them to bring it into action under very confusing disadvantages, and on a more confined field. A bright and bold conception.

The general, bidding Maxwell keep his present ground for a time, went back, and brought up the infantry in person. With these last, in steady columns, he now moved down upon the river. They marched silent and firm, every man in his place. It was to be the triumph of discipline.

The courage of the heart was to be aided by the quick eye, the obedient ear, and the keeping calmly in the ranks. A cannonade played upon their line of march as they approached the ford: it was distant, and without effect. As they passed up out of the river, and the head of the column gained the clear ground above, a field battery, within range, opened upon them hotly. It was at this the anxious moment of directing with care the formation of the lines for battle, that the orderly dragoon, riding close to the general, had his skull torn away by a cannon-ball. The horse, feeling the relaxed bridle and collapsing limb of his rider, fell a trembling, and kicked and plunged franticly, till he got quit of the corpse. An incident not worth the notice, but for the moment of its occurrence, and the trouble it caused to those immediately near.

Under this cannonade general Wellesley formed up his people in three lines; two of infantry, the third of his cavalry; which, as soon as the columns had crossed the ford, rode smartly down from their position, and took battle station in reserve. As a watching check upon the enemy's right, were left the Mysore horse and some cavalry of the peishwah's which marched with our army; but, though useful here, they could not be ventured in the fight.

The order of battle being thus skilfully changed, the infantry of Scindia was compelled to present a new front. They did so with greater ease than was expected. The line they now formed rested with its right upon the Kaitna, and its left upon

the village of Assaye and the Juah. The front now presented by the enemy was one vast battery, especially towards the left, so numerous and weighty were the guns, and so thickly were they disposed immediately near the village.

The fire was rapid, furious, and terrible in execution: the British guns, few in number, opened as the line advanced, but were almost on the instant silenced. Their gunners dropped fast, and the cattle fell lacerated or killed beside them. With the fierceness of the struggle and the fearfulness of the hazard, the undaunted spirit of the general rose. He at once abandoned the guns, and directed an advance with the bayonet: with the main body he soon forced and drove the enemy's right, possessing himself of their guns by a resolute charge.

During this movement, the pickets and 74th regiment were losing men so fast by the fire from Assaye, that a body of Mahratta horse, which, hastening to that flank, had moved round the village, charged them, and with severe effect; though the heart, or centre, of the 74th still held gallantly together. Maxwell, with his dragoons, rode swiftly to their rescue, and spurring hard upon their assailants, drove them, with great slaughter, across the Juah. Amid a shower of musketry and grape, this leader and his cavalry rode on through the enemy's left: the gallant remnant of the pickets and 74th pressed on, and the battle was already won. The sepoys of the main body, possessed in great part the very ground on which the enemy had stood, and the guns which he had fought to the last, the gunners in many

instances actually suffering themselves to be bayonetted at their posts, in others lying dead, as it seemed, under their cannon. These sepoys rushed on in pursuit. Their officers could not control their elated ardour; but, happily the 78th British, upon the left of all this early exultation, stood firm and steady, with unbroken ranks. A cloud of the enemy's horse hung dark upon the hill above, ready to burst, like a torrent, upon the brave confusion, but they durst not dash and break, as they must have done, upon that rock.

Some of Scindia's routed battalions clustered confusedly near Assaye, where numbers of the infantry and gunners, who had cast themselves upon the earth, to avoid the sabres of the cavalry, by feigning death, started up, and joined them. This body attempted a new formation; again opened the guns; and renewed the battle.

A large column of the enemy, already in full retreat, rallied at the hopeful sound, turned, and formed again. These the brave Maxwell checked by a gallant charge, and in this good service closed his honourable life. Among the last efforts of a day of efforts was a second attack of the formidable artillery near the village of Assaye. This general Wellesley led up in person, at the head of the 78th and 7th native cavalry. The enemy fled without awaiting the shock; but as the general was advancing, his horse, struck by a cannon-shot that carried away its leg, fell under him. A field, flowing with blood, black with abandoned cannon, and covered with slain, remained in possession of the British. It was near dark when the firing ceased.

That night Wellesley lay down, and slept upon the field of battle. For a time, this day, "the die had spun doubtful;" but the secret impulse which prompted him to give the battle, did still, through all its thunder, whisper in his ear, "Victory!" The toss and fiery tramp of his favourite Arab were stilled in death, but the spur of the rider was not cold. A favouring Providence had shone kind on his bold hopes, and covered his head in battle. This success involved mighty consequences. "Never," says Dr. Southey, "was any victory gained under so many disadvantages. Superior arms and discipline have often prevailed against as great a numerical difference; but it would be describing the least part of this day's glory to say, that the number of the enemy were as ten to one: they had disciplined troops in the field under European officers, who more than doubled the British force; they had a hundred pieces of cannon, which were served with perfect skill; and which the British, without the aid of artillery, twice won with the bayonet." *

The loss of his little band was a third killed and wounded: the sepoys had vied with the British in ardour; and the native cavalry had rode stirrup to stirrup with the heroes of the 19th dragoons. Of the enemy, twelve hundred were found dead upon the field; their wounded were countless, and scattered over all the immediate neighbourhood.

Scindia now wrote, by a minister, to general Wellesley, artfully inviting him to send an officer to

* Quarterly Review, vol. xiii. p. 225.

the Mahratta camp to treat. This the general of course refused; but expressed his readiness to receive, in his own encampment, any person duly empowered by the confederates to negotiate terms of peace. Operations were continued. Burhanpoor surrendered to colonel Stevenson on the 16th of October, and the strong fort of Asseerghur capitulated on the 21st. On the 11th of November, Scindia, with little sincerity of intention for peace, sent an ambassador to the British camp. After various conferences a truce was agreed upon between Scindia and the British in the Deccan and Guzerat. The principal conditions were, that Scindia's people should occupy a position forty miles east of Ellichpoor, and that the British should not advance farther into his territories. This truce was concluded the 23d of November. While it was going forward, general Wellesley had descended the Bajoorah pass to co-operate with colonel Stevenson, whose corps he had directed upon Gawilghur, a fort belonging to the rajah of Berar, with whom there had been no cessation of hostilities. Upon the 28th of November the general came up with a large body of Scindia's horse in company with the army of Berar. Taking a just and ready advantage of the non-fulfilment of the conditions of the truce, he resolved to attack them. He therefore marched forwards to Parterly, where he was joined by colonel Stevenson. The day was sultry hot, the troops were fatigued, and he designed no further movement till the evening; but the enemy's horse appeared in his front very strong, and skirmished with the cavalry of Mysore. The general supported the Mysoreans by pushing for-

ward the pickets of infantry, and went out in person to reconnoitre, and take up ground for his camp. To his joy he found the confederates drawn up on the plains of Argaum in order of battle. Scindia's horse formed one heavy mass upon the right; upon their left were the Berar infantry and guns, flanked by their own cavalry; while, on Scindia's extreme right, hovered a vast cloud of pindarries and light troops. The united forces occupied a front of five miles, having the village of Argaum, with its gardens and enclosures, in their rear, and a plain, intersected by watercourses, in their front. Scindia and Munnoo Bapoo, brother to the rajah of Berar, commanded this force in person. General Wellesley moved down on them in one compact column, and rapidly formed his lines of attack. The first composed of infantry, the second of cavalry. The Mogul and Mysore horse covered his left, and protected his rear. As the British line advanced, a large body of Persian soldiers, in the pay of Berar, rushed upon the 74th and 78th regiments, and maintained a short and desperate conflict at close quarters. They were destroyed. At the same time, the cavalry of Scindia made a fierce and crowded charge upon a battalion of native infantry (the 26th). They were received with steadiness, and repulsed with a loss so heavy, that they fled in confusion. Victorious on all points, the British line pressed forward; the enemy gave way in every direction, and abandoned eight and thirty pieces of artillery to their conquerors. The cavalry pursued by moonlight, and captured their elephants and baggage.

The army marched instantly to invest Gawilghur, a strong fortress upon a lofty and rocky height, fortified by such walls, ramparts, and towers as look inaccessible. The heavy ordnance and stores were dragged, by hand, over a most difficult country. On the night of the 12th, colonel Stevenson broke ground, and erected two batteries against the north face of the fort; while general Wellesley, on his part upon the steep side of a mountain, that looked on the south defences, constructed another battery, with a view to breach the wall near the south gate; or, at all events, to cause a diversion. On the 13th these batteries opened. On the night of the 14th the breaches in the walls of the outer fort became practicable; at ten the next morning the place was carried by assault. The columns on the north stormed the breaches, and the troops on the south side entered by escalade. After this blow the rajah of Berar sent in an ambassador, and proposed peace.

The negotiations were opened on the 16th of December, and concluded the following day. The general now communicated to Scindia that he should consider the truce at an end from December the 27th, and should act accordingly. On the 28th of December general Campbell dispersed a Pindarree force of 10,000 men at Moodianoor. On the 29th Scindia's vakeels closed with the terms of general Wellesley; and a treaty of peace between their humbled master and the British government was ratified and signed.

The conduct of this war would of itself have conferred a deathless fame on general Wellesley.

It was glory enough for a single life; and would have secured for him a niche in history.

A monument in memory of the battle of Assaye was erected at Calcutta. The inhabitants of that city presented him with a sword; and his own officers testified their attachment and admiration, by the gift of a golden vase.

In England, the thanks of parliament were voted him, and he was made a knight-companion of the Bath.

Of all the honours paid him, none was more affecting than the parting address of the people of Seringapatam. They implored "the God of all castes and of all nations to hear their constant prayer; and wherever greater affairs than the government of them might call him, to bestow on him health, glory, and happiness;"—a prayer by which the integrity and mildness of British government were recognised in the person of its calm, firm representative.

CHAP. V.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY RETURNS TO ENGLAND. — ACCOMPANIES THE EXPEDITION TO COPENHAGEN. — NAPOLEON. — HIS DESIGNS ON SPAIN AND ON PORTUGAL. — HIS MEASURES.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY returned to England in 1805, and was received with honour and regard. In the November of this same year he sailed for Hanover, in command of a brigade in the army of lord Cathcart. In consequence of the fatal battle of Austerlitz, this army returned to England in the February following, without any opportunity of service. He was now appointed to the command of a district at home; and, upon the death of marquis Cornwallis, was made colonel of the thirty-third regiment, a corps in which he had served long, and with distinction. In 1806 he first took his seat in the house of commons, as member for Newport in the Isle of Wight. In the same year he married the honourable Catherine Pakenham, sister to the earl of Longford.

His experience in Indian affairs enabled him at this time to expose to ministers the absurdity of a project then contemplated, namely, the employment of negro troops in the East Indies, and of sepoys in the West. The negroes were to have been substituted for British soldiers in the East, and the sepoys in the West.

This plan, conceived in utter ignorance or total

misapprehension of its impracticability,—a plan, if practicable, pregnant with consequences the most fatal,—was, at his masterly and manly remonstrance, abandoned. His high estimate of the British soldier, and the sentiments of good faith towards the sepoy which breathed throughout this remonstrance, must have produced no common impression of respect and reverence for the integrity of the writer.

In 1807 he was appointed chief secretary in Ireland, under the duke of Richmond; and, among other measures, established a police for the city of Dublin. This step was censured, abused, and, by some, violently opposed; but the measure was happily carried in spite of all resistance; and experience has proved its great use and importance.

In the summer of this year, sir Arthur again embarked for foreign service; and sailed with the expedition, under lord Cathcart, to Copenhagen.

No armament ever sailed from the British shores, in which it was so painful to serve. Nothing does more clearly prove that England was fighting for her political existence, than her being compelled to attack Denmark. With this power she was at peace up to the very moment that twenty-seven sail of the line, and a powerful armament of troops, appeared before her capital, and demanded the surrender of her fleet. "You cannot," said our diplomatists, "defend it from Napoleon, who will employ it against our nation: surrender it to us, *in pledge*, until the conclusion of a general peace; we will restore it faithfully: reject our proposal, and we must take it by force of arms." The spirit which had tamely yielded to such proposal had been, in very deed,

unprincely: the crown-prince threw down the gauntlet. Nor was it, till the troops of his unprepared government had been beaten in the field, and, from amid the flaming edifices and blood-stained streets of Copenhagen, the cries of a suffering and terrified population awoke him to a clear view of the sure issue of the contest, that he consented to a measure as humiliating as was ever yet proposed to a sovereign or a patriot. There might have been greater moral and true Christian dignity in the prince, had he calmly weighed all circumstances, foreseen the vainness of resistance, and sacrificed his scruples and his pride to the necessity which so imperiously dictated our course, and might have excused his quiet submission; but with a crown on the head, a sword by the side, and blood in the veins, this was scarcely to be expected from the ruler of any kingdom. The preventive policy of the British ministers was only to be justified upon the ground of an absolute necessity: such it was. The armament was on a large and wise scale; and the operations of it were conducted with vigour. In the only action of any importance which took place, sir Arthur Wellesley commanded. The only body of Danish troops which ventured to contest a position, near Kioge, was attacked by him, driven from it, pursued to a strong intrenchment in their rear; from thence, again driven by assault, forced into the town, and there routed with very considerable loss. Sir Arthur then moved towards the centre of the island, to quiet and disarm the inhabitants. He was not present at the terrible and melancholy bombardment of the city. He was

sent for, however, the moment the enemy showed a disposition to treat; and was appointed, conjointly with sir Home Popham and colonel Murray, to fix the terms of the capitulation. In diplomacy, as in war, sir Arthur was ever prompt and decisive: the terms were discussed and settled in one night; the ratification was exchanged in the morning after; the objects of our government were unconditionally accomplished; and the gates of the capital, the citadel, and the dock-yards, were the same evening in our possession.

Even at this distance of time, we cannot record without a pang, the bombardment of Copenhagen. We reflect, with no little pleasure, upon the fact, that, during the whole of the arduous war conducted by sir Arthur in the Peninsula, no city was ever laid in ruins by bombardment; and important as in one particular instance was the speedy reduction of the fortress besieged by him, he would not resort to that extreme measure, but preferred all the inconvenience and anxiety of a delay, which greatly interfered both with the plan and prosecution of his projected operations. We are not supposing that the bombardment of Copenhagen was avoidable by the lords Cathcart and Gambier: without it, the success of their attempt had been doubtful; and they only acted in obedience to the orders of a government, which must have calmly considered that painful step, and commanded it. Bombardments should, in these days, by a compact among civilised nations, be for ever abolished. We shudder as we read of women and children, old men and infants, slain by the sword; and exclaim loudly

against the barbarities of ancient warfare. The allowed practice of bombardment realises the same cruelties; for, though the soldier does not exactly see his victims, and flesh his sword, yet, as through the long and wakeful night he serves in the batteries, which throw shells among human habitations, he knows well what a scene of blood and lamentation lies beyond the wall, lofty to hide, but vain to protect, the miserable sufferers.

We are not supposing that sir Arthur would have hesitated at the execution of those orders any more than lord Cathcart, or that he disapproved the measure, only it is a subject of honest rejoicing to his biographer, that he was not employed in that painful operation. At this period of his life it is necessary, before passing on to the relation of his next service, to sketch the position of that wonderful man, that implacable enemy of England, and of all liberty, Napoleon Buonaparte.

"This child and champion of democracy" had long thrown off the mask: never had ambition a more stern unyielding votary than Napoleon; never had tyranny a more imposing, splendid, and dazzling aspect than it wore in him. To be a figure among ciphers was his aim and pride; but for the events, of which Spain became the glorious theatre, he would have produced the decay of an age, and the degradation of a world.

As the map of Europe lay spread before him, and the crossed swords upon Austerlitz, Jena, and Friedland, told silently of defeated armies, and subjugated kingdoms, he turned dissatisfied away; there was a "precious isle set in the silver

sea," which disfigured that map; for it disputed his title and defied his power. The means to assail and to destroy that kingdom occupied all his thoughts; and his appetite for conquest was unsated while England remained free, and while her navies rode on every sea triumphant.

Buonaparte's attempt on Spain was the lightest crime and the greatest error of his public life. A degraded and distracted court displayed to him its weakness, and invited his interference: the throne was the only one on the continent of Europe on which a Bourbon was still seated, and that Bourbon was an incapable monarch, and an imbecile father: a fine country thus governed was, to his eye, like a sword resting ingloriously in its scabbard, in the dwelling of a dotard, who could neither draw nor wield it.

With the population of Spain in his armies, and the ports of Spain in his possession (a vast line of coast for the training and supply of mariners), England might yet, he thought, be reached. His pursuit of her was steady and unwearied, and woe to England if she had found no foreign field on which to meet him. Woe to her, if the arrayed hosts of all Europe, guided by this powerful but evil genius, had with undivided strength and energy been directed upon her shores. Of a truth, deep was the gloom that overspread the political horizon at the peace of Tilsit: the black eagle of Prussia drooped in a fetterlock, the eagles of Austria and Russia, with stained breasts and torn plumage, had flown back enfeebled and tamed to their own eyries, while the golden eagle of France soared above her victorious legions,

high and alone, like the fabled bird of the heathen god.

France, Flanders, Italy, and Switzerland, obeyed the call of the imperial edict: from the corn-field, the vineyard, and the mountain-pasture, millions, that might have lived and died in peace, were dragged to perish in the wars and fightings born of those lusts ambition breeds. We say not, that all were dragged reluctantly. France stood a-tiptoe, astonished at her own elevation; she exulted in her chief; ran the career of conquest with delight; and, but that he rode the willing steed too hard, would have pranced proudly under such a rider as Napoleon to this very hour. It was not, however, to be: there was a hope for the enslaved continent among its miserable nations—a hope buried and hidden from all view or expectation.

Spain had long been the submissive ally of France. The word of Buonaparte was law with Charles IV. The Spanish government was corrupt; the whole body politic was diseased to the very core; the court was profligate. "Peace with England, and war with all the world," is a political proverb in Spain. They were now at peace with France and the submiss world, and at war with England. The contest of Spain with the republic of France had terminated in a disgraceful peace, and placed a yoke upon her neck. Hostilities with England followed of course; and, as a consequence, the interruption and ruin of all her commercial relations, and the destruction of her navy. The treasure of her American possessions under the flag of Portugal was yet suffered to reach her, and was largely drawn upon by the de-

mands of her burdensome ally. With embarrassed finances, and with a low public credit, she lay the deplorable and helpless victim of treachery the most base, and incapacity the most despicable. The moment was at length come, when Buonaparte found leisure to attempt what he had long designed; what he might have found a better pretext for doing before, and might have done in an open, nay, a justifiable, manner, viz. the dethronement of the Bourbons. At the breaking out of the war between France and Prussia, Godoy had corresponded secretly with the court of Berlin, and issued a proclamation at Madrid, which looked like the first step towards throwing off the grievous yoke of a troublesome alliance. The battle of Jena supervened and confounded this effort, which Napoleon might justifiably have resented.

It is the opinion of many, that, in open and authorised war thus waged, and with the avowed object of dethroning the reigning family, and taking the land into possession, Spain, as a nation, would not have offered any strong resistance, but would have received the conqueror and hailed him as king. Not so: the Spaniards are a people attached with an ignorant and superstitious reverence to accustomed names and sounds. They would bear much before they would dethrone a native prince; more before they would resist the will of the church; and would undergo any thing rather than receive a foreigner to be their king. Oppressed by their government they might be; roused to turn upon the ministers with violence, and even a momentary ferocity: but interfere between Spaniard and Spaniard, and, like man

and wife, they drop their feud, and unite to drive away all interposers in their quarrel.

Napoleon evidently thought that there would be a general and united resistance if he went openly to war, either by a direct attack upon the whole royal family, or by taking advantage of the unnatural quarrel between father and son, and supporting one against the other in open and active hostility. The whole of the intrigue by which he sought to gain his end was mean, and beneath the character of that brave ambition of which lowliness had not been hitherto the ladder. In virtue of his alliance with Spain, he asked a contingent of troops to aid him in the North, and having thus withdrawn the flower of the Spanish army under Romana, sent the greater part to Denmark. His next measure was the secret treaty with Charles IV. for partitioning Portugal: one third was to form a princedom for Godoy; a third for the queen of Etruria; Lisbon and the lion's portion for himself.

While planning this treachery, he was negotiating with the weak prince of Brazil for a renunciation of the British alliance, the seizure of British property, the imprisonment of British residents, and the adoption of the continental system.

Meanwhile, the treaty for dividing this little kingdom was ratified at Fontainbleau, on the 29th of October, 1807. Portugal was to be immediately invaded and taken possession of by the united armies of France and Spain. 28,000 French soldiers, and 27,000 Spaniards, were assigned for this service; while 40,000 French troops were to be assembled at Bayonne, as a reserve, in case any expedition

from England, or any rising of the people of Portugal, should make it necessary to support the invasion with reinforcements.

Junot, to whom the operation was intrusted, immediately traversed Spain: every where the inhabitants saw him pass with sullen and unfriendly eyes. There was a vast number of conscripts in his corps; and Junot would have gladly made a halt at Salamanca to organise his army. By an order from Paris, he was directed to go forward instantly, and march rapidly to his destination.

He crossed the brown and barren hills of Beira, the latter end of November, and did not find one pass occupied, nor the slightest preparation to oppose him. The Spanish contingent joined him on the frontier of Portugal: his march to Lisbon was rapid, in the hope that he might secure as captives that house of Braganza, which, by the dictum of the gentle "child and champion of democracy," had "ceased to reign."

The British factories were expelled; the British minister dismissed; British property confiscated; and the ports were closed against the British flag, as soon as the march of Junot was known. Upon these submissions of a weak and terrified prince, the English admiral and ambassador looked on with regret and contempt; but, aware of the great importance attached to the withdrawing of the royal family, they continued to urge their embarkation to the very last moment.

Irresolute and timid, the prince lingered on till the French were within a few hours' march of Lisbon, and then frightened at reading in the Moniteur,

" that the house of Braganza had ceased to reign," he sent to Sir Sidney Smith and Lord Strangford, the English admiral and ambassador, and accepted the protection of the flag against which he had just closed his port. He embarked on the 27th of November, and sailed on the 29th: in a few hours after, the bold Junot, with a weak column of exhausted grenadiers, was at the gates of his capital. The people were, by these measures, delivered up bound and defenceless by a prince, who, having first had the meanness to submit without any show of resistance, now fled from the consequences of that very invasion which he had tamely suffered.

Taken as it were by surprise, and disgusted with the conduct of their prince, they remained apparently still and indifferent to their fate.

There was a slight tumult in Lisbon, when Junot took down the arms of Portugal, and put up those of the emperor, but it was immediately quelled. The French general was peacefully busied in the labours of his command, and preparing himself for any attack or descent from England.

Of the population, a few of the upper class were fraternising with their new masters; but the many were paying their contributions with smothered curses, and holding their breath till the day of loud and free utterance might return. His eagles planted upon the towers of Lisbon without resistance, and Junot neither wanting nor asking succour, Napoleon had but a slender pretext to move forward his army of reserve. They were, however, already advancing into the very heart of Spain in two formidable bodies under Dupont and Moncey; while a corps of

12,000 men under Duhesme had penetrated through the eastern Pyrenees, and obtained possession of Barcelona and other strong places, by artifices of a nature so treacherous, that war in its dignity disdains their practice; and officers and troops are alike dishonoured and insulted by such employment. The fortresses of the north, and the main roads from France to Madrid, were occupied by French troops.

The royal family of Spain, during these dangerous and insulting movements, were occupied in a manner that nothing but the crowded and concurring testimonies of the writers of all sides and parties can induce the reader to believe possible. Ferdinand, the prince of Asturias, was soliciting the honour of a matrimonial alliance with the house of Napoleon, and asking aid against his father. Charles and Godoy were inviting his help against the treason of Ferdinand. The emperor was silent to both: his troops were quietly and steadily gaining ground.

The court of Spain was, at this period, at Aranjuez; and, a sudden fear possessing them, they resolved on flying to America, and prepared immediately to retire upon Seville. On learning these intentions, the party of Ferdinand broke out with violence, and the populace of Aranjuez, roused by their example, surrounded the palace, and demanded, in tumultuous and angry tones, that the royal family should not move; nor were they pacified, till a distinct assurance was given, that the court would not depart from Aranjuez. The day following, there was a riot in Madrid, and the house of Godoy was broken into and plundered. On the next, he was himself

assaulted at Aranjuez; his life saved with difficulty by the timely protection of the royal guards; and he was placed in arrest.

Charles IV., terrified by these scenes of violence, and alarmed by the accounts from Madrid, abdicated the throne. On the 20th, Ferdinand was proproclaimed king at Madrid, amid the shouts and rejoicings of a vast and excited multitude.

Murat, the grand duke of Berg, who at this moment was commander-in-chief of all the French forces in Spain, had his head-quarters at Aranda de Duero, and hearing of these things marched without loss of time upon Madrid. He disposed 30,000 men in a position surrounding it, and entered it in person at the head of 10,000 on the 23d of March. He here received a messenger from Charles IV. stating that his abdication was not of free will, therefore invalid. When Ferdinand entered Madrid on the 24th, Murat refused to recognise him as king. Ferdinand presented the French general with the sword of Francis I., a proud trophy of other days. The grand duke of Berg accepted this gift, sullied alike by the hand which under such circumstances gave and that which received it, but still declined the act of recognition: a matter of such moment required, he said, the fiat of his master the emperor.

Napoleon, vexed at the hasty advance of Murat, and the unnecessary occupation of Madrid before his plans were ripe, sent Savary, on whose address he could depend, to rectify the error. Savary found Ferdinand in all the perplexity of a man proclaimed and hailed a king by the popular voice, but pro-

nounced a rebel and usurper by his father, and surrounded by 40,000 soldiers in the service of that ally, upon whose recognition he deemed all the security of his title to depend,— a recognition as yet withheld.

The artful agent of a faithless master pointed out to Ferdinand that a journey to Burgos to meet Napoleon would conciliate his immediate favour, and counteract all the plots of his father and Godoy.

The weak prince set forth on his foolish and fatal journey with the subtle Savary for his companion. The emperor was not at Burgos, nor at Vittoria, whither he was persuaded to proceed. The distance to Bayonne was short, it was but just within the confines of France; and Savary suggested that the confidence thus reposed in his master would flatter and delight him.

The populace of Vittoria, in fear for their prince, clamoured against his departure. They were in such earnest as to cut the traces of his carriage; but blinded by fear, or by a hope born of folly, he insisted on proceeding. He reached Bayonne, dined at the table of Napoleon, and was visited the same evening by the companion of his journey, who, with a countenance changed in its expression, but with a forehead unabashed, informed him that he was a prisoner, and that the Bourbon dynasty would rule in Spain no longer. By an arrangement, which required so little finesse that Murat effected it, Charles, the queen, and Godoy, took the same journey, and shared the same fate of degradation in a lighter form; if, indeed, there were not more dignity in being a guarded captive, which was the case

with the prince of Asturias. Charles accepted a safe retreat in soft and luxurious Italy with a pension. Godoy was also pensioned and dismissed, to share the exile of the profligate queen, and her cajoled and contemptible husband. Napoleon was, to all appearance, master of Spain. His troops garrisoned all those fortresses on the frontier which are the strong-holds and keys of the kingdom. From the citadels of St. Sebastian, of Pampeluna, and of Figueras, from the forts of Monjuic, and the walls of Barcelona, French sentinels looked down upon the still and astonished people. The splendid cavalry of the imperial guard, which had accompanied the grand duke of Berg to Madrid, paraded its streets, confident in their strength and security; the dangers, of which both Talleyrand and Fouché had warned the emperor, seemed already past: war had not broken out, and yet all which he desired was accomplished. The Spanish Bourbons had signed away their birthright; Spain was his; and the contempt with which the court had inspired him was transferred to the nation.

CHAP. VI.

THE RISING OF THE SPANISH PEOPLE. — SCENES AT MADRID AND IN THE PROVINCES.

THERE was a moral dignity in the Spanish people, of which Napoleon appears to have been incredulous. The two most powerful principles of human feeling lived warm in their hearts, — they were patriotic and religious: their patriotism was not a vanity; neither was their religion a name. They loved their country, and all that nature and habit had connected with it; — their mountains; their rivers; their language; their music; and those fragments of their old *cançionero*, which in every village some were yet found to sing, and many to listen to. Again, — they loved their faith. The Spanish Christians, for 500 years, had struggled for it against the Moors; and the memory of that struggle is not yet dead. The rigid orthodoxy of the Spanish people has been quite independent of the inquisition and its fires: their fear of God; their reverence for his altars; their deep and warm devotion, laid them prostrate at the feet of a crafty priesthood; and a haughty hierarchy, leagued with a heartless sovereign, weighed them down.

But the virtue of the Spaniards had been outraged and insulted by the conduct of a wicked court, their loyalty abused by enormous and criminal imposts, and their pride wounded by an alliance with the French, to whom the most disgraceful concessions had been made; by whom daily and increasing sacri-

fices were demanded, and who were at all times hateful to the Spaniards. They had been murmuring over their abject condition for many months. The surface of society was agitated, and heaving with hidden but fierce fires, which threatened some speedy and violent eruption. Their reverence for royalty in the person of Charles could not keep them in observance of a like respect for his incapable and guilty minister, Godoy. They loathed the man, his faction, and his measures, and were resolved to get rid of them. Popular commotions broke out at last in many parts of the kingdom. When it was found that Charles was determined upon going all lengths with his adviser, the people rose in fierce tumult, menaced the minister's life, welcomed the abdication of the terrified and weak father, and hailed the elevation of the unknown and foolish son. The abdication of Charles and the fall of Godoy appeased them for the moment. They saw in the elevation of Ferdinand to the throne a remedy for every grievance.

When the public mind was in a tumult of joy at the accession of Ferdinand, whom an indignant nation had summoned to the throne, Murat entered Madrid with a French army. He would not, of course he could not, recognise the king who had been chosen. The people, as they stood chilled in their hopes, and suspicious for the future, anxiously asked what did he there at all? This they asked each other in those squares and streets where their pride was wounded, and their jealousy awakened by the irritating presence of the brilliant and haughty soldiery of France. Of a sudden they heard of the departure of Ferdinand for Bayonne, a journey

undertaken before they had time to prevent it: then they heard of the flight of Charles, and the escape of Godoy; next they saw Murat appointed member of the governing junta, and they found French troops on all sides advancing. Muleteers from the north had brought intelligence that their frontier fortresses had been treacherously seized. The peasants that came into market lingered to warm their hate of the foreigner before they returned to their expecting children; and the women, who kneel in long crowds by the banks of the Manzanares, invoked the Virgin and St. Isidro; and as they thought on those dear to them, they paused and sighed in their labours: not a sound was there of the customary laughing and loud merriment.

As early as the 23d of April, there was a serious riot at Toledo; but by the timely advance of Dupont's division, the city, which is not a large one, was restored to order; and the peasants who had flocked into it to assist in the commotion were dispersed.

On the morning of the 2d of May a crowd was gathered in front of the royal palace at Madrid round an old fashioned Spanish carriage, which, it was rumoured, was to convey don Antonio, the last Spanish prince remaining still in Madrid, to Bayonne. Some discontent might have been perceived, and some angry ebullition of popular feeling might have been looked for; but few would have foreseen that whirlwind of vengeance which was then nigh. Mighty and momentous consequences for the hopes and happiness of all Europe hung upon the movements of that swart and surly crowd.

The report of the destination of the carriage was unfounded in fact; but as it was uttered so it was received; and the mob manifested their indignation by cutting the traces and forcing it back into the yard, with furious curses upon the French. Colonel la Grange, an aide-de-camp of Murat's, came to learn the cause of the disturbance. They immediately assailed him with abuse and menace; and he was saved only by the intervention of Spanish officers and authorities. The colonel went away, and returned with a party of soldiers: the mob fell upon them instantly; and the war of Spain may date its commencement from that hour.

In every quarter of the city the people rushed upon the astonished soldiery, of whom many were walking about the streets in pleased and idle wonder at the novelties this capital presented; some indeed without their arms.

But when human passion has once the mastery, its actings, though brave, are, especially in revenge, ferocious and pitiless. They slew the soldiers with whatever weapons or means of destruction came first to hand. Gun, pistol, sword, dagger, clasp-knife, and stones, were all used in this sudden onset. From the windows and roofs of houses shots were fired, and weighty missiles hurled down upon the aghast and bewildered Frenchmen. This was not a plotted assault on the part of the people. It was the sudden burst of indignation no longer to be repressed. Neither was there, on the part of the Spaniards, any ignorance of the immediate and certain consequences: these might not have been thought of at the moment; but, as soon as they

were, they were contemplated fearlessly and contemptuously.

In the same spirit war was waged by Spaniards to the very last: all the details of their defeats and disasters, their panics and runnings, are known, and have been visited with a full, perhaps a useful, exposure; but the fact of a valiant, constant resistance to the legions of France, on the part of the Spanish people, for five years, stands out from the page of history in bold and glorious relief; and here it began. This was the declaration of war by Spain against Napoleon; and it was written and sealed in blood.

Among the many incidents of this memorable day was an attack upon the French hospital, of which Southey, jealous for the honour of the Spaniard, and chivalric in his own generous conceptions of the scene, speaks with natural horror and indignation; but a military man knows that the attendants, orderlies, and convalescents of a military hospital, are capable not only of defence but of active hostility. The military historian Napier accordingly relates it without any such feeling against the Spaniards. The Spanish troops in Madrid remained shut up in their barracks, and under the close control of their officers throughout the whole of this strange contest. No Spanish soldiers took any part in the struggle, except two officers of artillery, on duty at the arsenal, named Daoiz and Velarde, and a detachment of invalids under their orders. These officers hearing the sounds of the combat, and being told that a French column was advancing in the direction of their post, brought out guns to defend the approaches

to the arsenal, and loaded them with grape; being resolved to resist any assault of the arsenal by force. As soon as the enemy came in sight they opened upon them with these guns, and continued to fight them till they fell. Velarde was shot dead by a musket-ball. Daoiz was wounded in the thigh; but he sat up on the ground, and continued to give orders until, under three more wounds, he expired. Velarde was a fine young man of five-and-twenty. Daoiz was a man of thirty.

It has been said, that, as military men, they were not justified in acting as they did, without express orders. We think otherwise. They had charge of the arsenal: they already knew the fate of the Spanish fortresses in the north; and the moment was come when they had a right, *as Spaniards*, to choose their course of action. They well knew that an unarmed mob, even had they been assisted by the few Spanish regiments in garrison, could not long and effectually resist the bayonets and sabres of 25,000 choice troops; but they cast in their lot with the people; they saw the consequence; for Spain they were willing to fall, and with a devotion alike hopeless and heroic they did fall. It has been said by an eye-witness that they were under excitement from the wine they had just drank at a *déjeûné à fourchette*. It is customary to drink wine at that meal on the continent; and it is not improbable that the quantity usually taken at that hour, falling upon hearts full of their country's wrongs, may have given to their manner a passionate and (to the eye of a calm observer) an extravagant warmth; but we believe they acted from a principle of pure patriotism, and

that they seized the offered opportunity to act bravely, what they thought nobly. The column spoken of above soon gained possession of the arsenal, passing over the bodies of Daoiz and Velarde. The French cavalry, pouring into the city, charged through the streets, slew numbers, and made many prisoners. After nightfall the peasantry of the neighbourhood came armed, and in crowds, to the city gates: they were repulsed with great loss by the French guards; in the morning again they were charged, trampled down, and dispersed by the enemy's cavalry. Of the prisoners taken in Madrid, about 100 were tried by a French military commission, and shot in the Prado.* The stain of this cold and criminal execution attaches not, according to some authorities, to Murat, but to Grouchy, and to a colonel of the imperial guard. Murat, who had ordered their trial, and confirmed their sentence, forbade the execution of it, at the prayer of the municipality. His earnestness to save their lives was not exhibited by any extraordinary effort in person. The loss of lives in this rising of the people was not very great: the casualties of the French amounted to about 700; those of the Spaniards are estimated at 200; but accounts so contradictory, so exaggerated, and so interested, were published by both parties, that the best and calmest estimates may be far from correct: though it is certain that the rising was not premeditated, yet was it something more than accidental.

* A public walk and place of pleasant recreation for the citizens of Madrid.

The public mind was charged with matter fiercely combustible: it is of little moment to enquire when or from whence the igniting spark fell.

Murat had been forewarned of the temper of the people. He took no precautions. He was a man of lofty contemptuous courage; respecting no enemies who were not *in uniform*, and good soldiers to boot; and as he looked around upon the troops, whom he had so often led to victory, he regarded the idea of any rising upon them by the mob of a third-rate capital as an event of impossible occurrence; when therefore the burst actually came, all was confusion. French soldiers, as they stood or walked unarmed, were mobbed and massacred, and ran about wild, helpless of defence, and hopeless of resistance. Many fell beneath the knives of their pursuers, before the troops in or near the city received any orders. Murat caused them to beat "the general," and put himself at the head of as many men as he could collect in the square of the palace. With these, and with two pieces of artillery loaded with grape, he stood on the defensive, firing upon the people, until, at last, from the north and south gates, columns poured into the town. The cavalry of the imperial guard galloped up the streets Alcala and San Geronimo, which debouched upon the Puerta del Sol, and there established themselves upon the open space, while a strong column of 1500 men filled the street of San Bernardo, near the arsenal. The effusion of blood in many parts of the city continued till the Spanish authorities, and French generals, rode through the streets together waving white handkerchiefs, and inviting

the people to submission and peace. The first fruit of tranquillity was the military tribunal, and the second an order of the day, directing that all groups of Spaniards seen in the streets, exceeding eight in number, should be fired upon; that every village in which a French soldier was slain should be burned; and that all authors, publishers, and distributers of papers, or proclamations, inciting to revolt, should be led out and shot forthwith. He also went instantly to the junta of government, then sitting, and took on him the office of president. Murat is in his grave. He lived to wear a crown: he survived a hundred battles and combats, in which he bravely led the imperial cavalry of France; but he lived on only to fall at last by the muskets of a small guard of executioners in the mean hall of a petty town in Calabria.

At the news from Madrid all Spain arose and rushed to arms. The insults and injuries heaped on her by France had maddened her, and she was drunk with the spirit of revenge. The Spaniards are not a dark and designing people: they are frank and open, sudden and rash; in the moment of suspicion, jealous and credulous; in the act of vengeance, fiery and cruel.

It is not a matter of wonder, though certainly a subject of reproach, that, in many places of Spain, they disgraced the cause of patriotism, by the unreasonable tests they demanded of sincerity, by their ready credulity at the fatal cry "*Traidor!*" and by the summary punishments and instant massacres that followed. The thing is not new:—so much is it in the natural, though melancholy, course of events, in times of political trouble and confusion, that all

nations would exhibit bursts of fury and of crime, not very dissimilar, under like circumstances. The Spaniards, being natives of a southern climate, are quick, impassioned, imaginative, easily excited, and as suddenly depressed by melancholy, and repentant of excess. Their national character is directly contrasted to the gay, cold, witty, prosaic Frenchmen. They are "*good haters**," and firm friends; they cannot smile even with complacency on those whom they dislike; with them the mean of frigid indifference is unknown: if truly attached, they exhibit all the extravagance of fond admiration, and, alas! where they *act* their hate, they become barbarous and bloody.

At Cadiz, Seville, Carthagena, and in many other cities, the French and all Spaniards supposed partisans of Godoy and of Napoleon were put to death by the excited populace: many liberal-minded, innocent men, thus perished. It was a moment when reason was asleep, and diseased suspicions were awake; when a beaten and vindictive groom, or a ridiculed and scorned monk, was master of the noblest life, and could hunt an enemy to death by the simple word "*traidor*." Thus fell Solano at Cadiz, and Conde d'Aguilar at Seville. In Valencia, one Balthazar Calvo, an ecclesiastic and a canon, at the head of a fanatic mob, began and continued the bloody work of deliberate massacre for twelve days. A hundred victims bled beneath the knives of the assassins in his train: many families

* Dr. Johnson was wont to say he liked a good hater; and though it sounds not very Christian, we can understand the expression.

were made fatherless; but the cup of fury was presented to his own lips in turn: the wretch himself, with two hundred of his followers, were imprisoned, and strangled, by the miserable and disabused people. Filanghieri, the governor of Corunna, an Italian by birth, was put to death, under circumstances of cruelty horrible in the extreme, by the very troops he commanded. When Napoleon received the news from Madrid he was alarmed, and vexed.—"*Murat va mal et trop vite*" was his exclamation. But when he considered that he had 80,000 men in Spain, exclusive of the corps of Junot in Portugal; that all the frontier fortresses were in his possession; his main force occupying a position in the very heart of the country; the communication with France secure; that Spain was not only without a government, but without one single great or known character; that, of an army of one hundred and twenty thousand, fifteen thousand of the best were in Holstein with Romana, twenty thousand in Portugal, thirty thousand merely nominal, being a local militia never called out; and that the remainder, with the exception of eleven thousand Swiss and Walloons, mercenaries, were without officers, system, interior economy, or discipline; that Spain, in fact, had not only no army, but not even the frame-work of one to begin upon; he cast away all doubts as to his success, and pursued his combinations as calmly as if they had never been, even for a moment, disturbed. It has been said, that the French army had some points of weakness in its composition. Its conscripts were of different nations,—Germans, Swiss, Italians, and Poles. A great portion of the

born French were from the last conscription, a raw levy of young men; but the first elements of drill are soon completed, and in no troops so soon as in the French. Their infantry regiments were formed upon excellent skeletons; good non-commissioned officers were present to instruct them; good officers to command them, and always a sprinkling of old soldiers to lead them into fire under the same eagles beneath which they had themselves earned their cheverons of service, and won their decorations. So that, with respect to the last point of weakness, viz. the youth and inexperience of many of the French soldiers, the difference between them and the Spanish levies was enormous. With regard to the first imputed defect, viz. that men of different nations served in the French ranks, little importance can be attached to it. Napoleon's was a good service for a mercenary; and the foreign conscripts soon became reconciled to it. As to the cause for which they fought, they neither knew nor cared any thing about it. "Very few," observes sir Walter Raleigh, in his discourse of war in general, "of the infinite number thus untimely slain, were ever masters of the grounds of the dispute for which they suffered, or the true reason of their being led to battle."—"What deluded wretches," then he adds, "have a great part of mankind been, who have either yielded themselves to be slain in causes which, if truly known, their heart would abhor, or been the bloody executioners of other men's ambition!" It is a reflection of this sort that enables one to love and esteem the soldiers of an army as individuals, whom

as a body we designate by the harshest epithets, and act against with severity and vigour.

In most of the cities and towns in Spain, as soon as the first effervescence of public feeling had a little subsided, provincial and local juntas were formed for the conduct of public affairs: these juntas levied money and troops. At the sea-ports they opened an immediate intercourse with the English fleets upon their coasts, and sent deputies to England to ask aid in arms, clothing, and treasure, and to request the support of a British army. The joyous cries throughout all the land were, *Viva Fernando Septimo! Guerra con la Françia! Paz con Inghilterra! Guerra con el Mondo! Paz con Inghilterra!* While the people of Spain were thus manifesting their true sentiments, the council of Castile, the municipality of Madrid, and the governing junta, at the intimated desire of Napoleon, elected Joseph Buonaparte king of Spain. Cardinal Bourbon, primate of Spain, first cousin of Charles IV., and archbishop of Toledo, not only acceded to this arrangement, but actually wrote a letter to Napoleon, testifying his contentment with the new order of things.

Joseph Buonaparte, late king of Naples, reached Bayonne on the 7th of June: on the 15th the assembly of notables, composed of ninety-one Spaniards of condition, met in that town, — received Joseph as their king, — discussed the constitution prepared for them by Napoleon as a matter of form, and accepted it as a matter of course. Joseph now journeyed to Madrid, under escort of his brother's troops, and was proclaimed "KING OF SPAIN

AND THE INDIES," with the usual solemnities, amid a silent and sullen population, in a capital that bristled with French bayonets, and trembled to the salutes of French artillery. It proved an uneasy crown.

CHAP. VII.

THE AFFAIRS OF SPAIN.—HER FIRST REVERSES IN THE FIELD.—THE RISING IN PORTUGAL.—THE EXPEDITION UNDER SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

SUCH was the beginning of the war in the Peninsula. Spanish hands were early, and constantly, armed in this glorious contest. Spanish hearts beat warm and true to the very last: a thousand narrow and nameless rivulets that run among the hills of Spain, and water her valleys, were crimsoned with the life-blood of her sons. "That mighty stream of battle which, bearing the glory of England in its course, burst the barriers of the Pyrenees, and left deep traces of its fury in the soil of France*," but for the indomitable and persevering spirit of the Spanish nation would never have rolled over the rocky frontier of Portugal.

The great mind, the great individual agent, guided by whose genius the army of England, the only true and efficient *army* in Spain, did finally and fully triumph, was allowedly the duke of Wellington. All England, all Europe, have acknowledged this; nay, the very children of Spain have sung† it in the streets.

* Vide Napier. Preface, p. ix.

† What officer, or what soldier, that has served with the

That the deliverance of Spain was the sole work of their own hands has not been universally asserted by Spaniards: certain it is, it has not been believed by the world.

On the 30th of May two Spanish noblemen brought information to London, that the province of Asturias had risen "*en masse*," and that forty thousand men were embodied, with the intention of repelling the French.

In the south of Spain the patriots were early in communication with sir Hew Dalrymple at Gibraltar, and lord Collingwood on the eastern coast, and received encouragement and aid from those officers.

On the 6th of June, the French squadron at Cadiz surrendered to the patriots. A peace was on the instant concluded between England and Spain. The Spanish prisoners were immediately sent back. The English people warmly sympathised with the population of that country; and in proportion as they had been depressed, by contemplating the triumphs of Napoleon in the north of Europe, so were they now most extravagantly elated by the ignorant expectation of his immediate overthrow in the south.

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army of the Peninsula but has heard, and can easily recall to mind, the chorus-repetition of the words,

> "Valorosos valorosos los Ingleses,
> Valoroso milord Wellington?"

The very voices, and the very tones, and the tune, return as we write the words, and for a second of time we are carried back to Spain.

At this time the French force in Spain and Portugal was 120,000 men: they possessed all the fortresses of the latter kingdom, and many of those considered the most important in Spain; they had a reserve at Bayonne, and an army of 400,000 veterans in France, upon the Rhine, and in Germany.

It has been the fashion in England to rate military talent low, and hence generals have been viewed as persons secondary, and not requiring the same capacity as those called to fill political offices, and to be the advisers of the crown. It may be with safety affirmed, that this mistake, though not without its use in a free country, has often subjected the operations of our armies in war to the guidance and control of men alike incompetent to originate, to follow out, or fully and intelligently to sustain them. To the very opportunity now offered, the English cabinet, though willing, could not effectually and promptly rise: a fine and ample theatre for effort and exertion lay open before them, but they knew not how to wield the military strength of Britain. They could have commanded a disposable force of 70,000 men: they employed 30,000; and these divided and subdivided to provide for distant and different objects.

The alarum had spread through Catalonia. The French general Duhesme commanded in Barcelona, a city which had been early and treacherously seized, as also Monjuic and Figueras. The Spanish soldiers of the betrayed garrisons quitted their ranks, and flocked to the patriotic standard in Murcia and Valencia. All the insurrections of the

Spanish provinces took place at nearly the same moment; and the early hostile movements of the French divisions were nearly simultaneous.—Marshal Bessieres attacked, and of course worsted, the patriots of Navarre and Biscay, who merely rose armed, and declared themselves, but had neither leaders nor points of union, nor any combination. He dispersed many of their assemblages, and took away their arms: they always offered resistance, but it was vain. The division of Verdier beat them at Logroño, and put their leaders to death after the combat. The cavalry of Lasalle fell upon a body of Spaniards at Torquemada, and put a vast number to the sword, after which exploit they burned the town. There was something like a Spanish force at Segovia: general Freire defeated it, and took thirty pieces of artillery. At Cabeçon there was a battle between the Spanish troops under Cuesta and the French divisions of generals Merle and Lasalle. Here again the Spaniards were beaten, lost their artillery, were broken in upon by the brigade of cavalry under Lasalle, disarmed of some thousands of muskets, and a vast number of them were cut to pieces. By these active operations, and by the unpitying and unsparing severity with which the French used the sword, these provinces were awed, and for a while stilled; and the powerless and unhappy peasants saw the fierce horsemen of the enemy ride about to raise money, and collect provisions, which they furnished in fear. Cuesta, however, undismayed by his defeat, collected another army and his fugitives at Benevente; was joined by

Blake, from Astorga; and, advancing with 25,000 infantry, a few hundred cavalry, and from twenty to thirty pieces of artillery, took up a position at Rio Seco, and again ventured on a battle. Here he was attacked by marshal Bessieres, at the head of 15,000 men, with thirty guns. The marshal had two divisions of infantry; one of light cavalry; and his reserve was composed of four battalions, and a small body of horse grenadiers, all of the imperial guard. The Spaniards were signally defeated; but they were not disgraced. When their front line was down, and dead bodies strewed the field, Cuesta fell upon the French with his second line, and with his right wing broke in upon the enemy's (victorious already over half his army), and took from him six guns; but the Spaniards, though brave to fight, could not manœuvre, even had Cuesta been capable of moving them. The French check was soon repaired; the Spaniards were overpowered, and, after many brave rallies, driven from the field, and pursued by a superior cavalry, who, as usual, shone in the work of slaughter.

It was the disaster of this day which had opened the gates of Madrid to the intruder. In the province of Arragon the insurrection was organised by Don Josè Palafox, a patriotic noble, the captain-general of the district. The French general, Lefebre Desnouettes, marched upon Arragon with 4000 infantry, 800 cavalry, and his field artillery. At Tudela, the people broke down the bridge over the Ebro, and disputed the passage of that river. Lefebre forced it, and put to death the leaders of the rude levy by which he had been opposed.

Palafox, with 10,000 raw troops, waited for him on the Huecha. The Spaniards were beaten. They ventured a second combat on the Xalon; they were again beaten. Upon the 15th of June the French columns halted before the city of Zaragoza. Of the siege we shall give no detail;—suffice it to say, Zaragoza was not a fortress; but it contained forty or fifty thousand inhabitants, with hearts stronger than any bastions. For two months the citizens, aided by a few troops, sustained all the efforts to reduce them which the talents and courage of their enemy suggested. * Palafox, in the course of the first month, went forth and collected a few thousand men, and fought a battle to relieve them; but he was signally defeated at Epila. After this he re-entered the city, the investment of which had never been complete, and directed their efforts for its defence. A man of the people named "*Tio* †" Jorge, or Goodman George, as Colonel Napier happily translates it, was ever at his right hand; nor is there any doubt that he exercised a most powerful influence, not only over the populace but over Palafox himself, who was a man of a less firm and unyielding resolution than he has been generally regarded. The solid houses, and the walled convents, were battered, bombarded, and the half of them won by the assailants; still the people resisted. The French penetrated to the very heart of the city, and stood already upon the Cosso ‡; but on

* The division of Verdier was subsequently attached to Lefebre with a train of heavy guns.

† Literally, "uncle."

‡ A wide street so named.

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the opposite side the people still breathed defiance, and maintained the struggle. The wives and daughters of the defenders, the betrothed virgins of the youth of Zaragoza, behaved as became them. At length the baffled enemy retired.

Meantime the Catalan had so well obeyed the call of the somaten, which rung out upon his hills, that the peasants of eight districts were in arms. These men beat the French general, Swartz, early in June, at the pass of Bruck, where they had taken post among the rocks, and afterwards drove before them the division of Chabran, pursuing him with shouts and a dropping fire to the very walls of Barcelona. General Duhesme assaulted Geronà: the weak garrison and the willing citizens repulsed him.

In an attack upon Valencia, marshal Moncey was defeated; but he afterwards beat the Spaniards under Serbelloni at St. Felippe, and took post at St. Clemente. Cuenca rose, but general Caulaincourt put that city down.

In Andalusia, matters looked bright and promising. Dupont, who had passed the barrier of the Sierra Morena, had taken and plundered Cordova, sacked Andujar in a yet more deliberate and cruel manner, and alarmed the whole province, Seville in particular. After a series of blunders as great as his offences, Dupont capitulated in the open field with 18,000 French troops to the Spanish forces under Castaños and Reding. The battle of Baylen was a battle of movements, and not of hard fighting; and neither did the French soldiers show their usual spirit, nor the French general any of that talent which

he was thought to possess. Dupont, in his early operations, had been rash; and the rashness that is not attended with success is often very quickly changed for affright. There was some suspicion of treachery: Napoleon was furious at the disaster; while the Spanish exultation knew no bounds.

The spirit abroad in Spain soon fired the Portuguese. Irritated by the pride, the caprice, and the exactions of the French; affronted by their levities, and insulted by their violence; the Portuguese in the country began to stir themselves, and to exhibit their hatred in the only way in which they could — by secret assassinations. The first open blow was struck at Oporto. When the news from Spain reached general Bellesta, commanding the Spaniards in that city, he made the French general (Quesnel) and his staff prisoners; and leaving the Portuguese to take their own course, marched away to Gallicia. Insurrection soon broke out at Oporto, and spread along the Douro to Minko, as also in the valley of the Mondego, and penetrated the hills of Beira. Junot promptly, bravely, and with little bloodshed, disarmed the division of Spaniards near Lisbon, and placed them in confinement on board the hulks in the Tagus.

The insurrection was now so general and open, that the division of Loison in the north was twice regularly attacked, and greatly harassed by the Portuguese; there was a rising at Villa Viçiosa in the south, but it was soon put down. The town of Beja also rose. Colonel Maransin, with the troops driven just before from the Agarves, marched there; routed the patriots with slaughter; pillaged the

town, and set many houses on fire. There was an action at Leria similar to that at Beja in its character and issue; but the people of Thomar and Alcobaça, places not very distant, were not alarmed, and boldly declared themselves: at both places they were quieted and put down.

Loison, being recalled by Junot, left a garrison in Almeida; and on his march suffered great annoyance from the opposition of the peasantry on his route, which lay through a country difficult and rugged. There was fighting both at Guarda and Atalaya.

There was also a battle near Evora, in the south, where the Portuguese insurgents under general Leité were supported by a division of Spaniards under Moretti. The French, of course, beat them, slew vast numbers, and sacked the city. Coimbra was held by the insurgents from Oporto in strength: the bishop of Oporto was chief of the junta in that city. He claimed the assistance of England, and asked arms, ammunition, and clothing for 40,000 infantry, and 8000 cavalry, a demand implying thereby a power of raising and organising such a force, — an inflated folly or an interested deception. English agents, however, were sent to him, and to all the provinces of Spain: supplies were granted upon every idle representation; and treasure was squandered, and stores were scattered, with an improvident folly and an uncontrolled profusion.

It is not the least singular feature of the commencement of this war in the Peninsula, that the division of the British troops which first appeared in the field had been assembled for an expedition to

South America, with a view to conquests there, in direct hostility to old Spain. The 9000 men collected for that object were now disposable: they were placed under the orders of sir Arthur Wellesley, and he embarked with them from the harbour of Cork. When the fleet bearing the expedition had made a few days' sail, he took a run in a frigate to Corunna, to confer with the junta of Gallicia. The news of the lost battle of Rio Seco was here told him, the disaster softened, and the truth glossed after a manner alike natural and excusable. It is not likely that their account imposed greatly upon a man so sure to weigh their statements as sir Arthur, and so qualified to estimate them aright.

There is nothing wonderful in the pressing desire of this junta to receive for their Gallician levies arms and gold, which they knew to have been so largely and loosely proffered by the generous and elated English; neither were a brave people to be at all despised for imagining themselves as equal as they certainly were willing to fight their own battles with their invaders. Though the circumstance was not known at Corunna, it was at this time that a body of 18,000 French troops, with their eagles, had laid down their arms to Spanish troops. Let it be also remembered, that the character of the British soldier upon the continent was not looked upon by the Spaniards with much respect. It is, nevertheless, a mark either of fatuity or insincerity, that the junta of Gallicia should not only have rejected the assistance of British troops, but, recommending their debarkation in the north of Portugal, should

have promised to aid them by sending a Spanish division to Oporto, while they must have known, or ought to have known, that they were not themselves, at the moment, in a condition to defend their own province from any serious attack.

Sir Arthur next proceeded to Oporto, saw the busy and warlike bishop, listened to his plans, looked at the paper state of his army, but learned its real number and condition from colonel Browne. Informed of the true state of things by this officer, who had been placed there to collect intelligence and distribute supplies, he decided on not landing at this place. He now (having stipulated for the co-operation of 5000 Portuguese on the Mondego) took his people to the mouth of that river, and there disembarked them. He had previously consulted with sir Charles Cotton upon a descent at the mouth of the Tagus, — a measure that the ministers at home had strongly recommended, but which appeared to these officers on the spot, for many and good reasons, unadvisable. In like manner sir Arthur decided against proceeding southward towards Cadiz,—a plan that would, he saw, involve him in negotiation and delay.

A despatch from general Spencer having announced that he was at St. Mary's, near Cadiz, disengaged from any connection with the Spaniards, sir Arthur sent for his division. The appointment of sir Hew Dalrymple and the sailing of the armament under sir John Moore were communicated to him off the Mondego. This vexatious intelligence resolved him to make an immediate descent upon the coast with such troops as he had, and to com-

mence operations. With only 9000 men he threw himself into a country occupied by a well disciplined French army, mustering more than double his numbers; but with this force were the fortunes of Cæsar.

CHAP. VIII.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY LANDS IN PORTUGAL. — OPERATIONS OF HIS ARMY. — COMBAT OF ROLIÇA. — BATTLE OF VIMEIRO. — CONVENTION OF CINTRA.

THE disembarkation of the troops in Portugal took place near the little fort of Figueras, taken from the French in the early part of the insurrection by one Zagalo, a student in the university of Coimbra. Here the English first landed upon a service, the duration and the issue of which no one living, however prescient and sagacious, could have at all anticipated. The landing began on the 1st of August; but though the weather was favourable, the difficulties were so many that it was not completed till the 5th.

At this moment general Spencer arrived. As soon as he had learned the surrender of Dupont, he sailed with his division for the Tagus, and was directed by sir Charles Cotton to the Mondego. The united forces amounted to 12,300 men It was the desire of general Freire, who commanded all the Portuguese then in arms, that sir Arthur should abandon the coast, march up into the heart of Beira, and open an offensive campaign; and he promised large supplies of provision. Sir Arthur declined this measure. He gave Freire 5000 stand of arms, and the necessary ammunition for his troops, which did not exceed 6000 of all arms

effective; and these by no means in a state to give real assistance in any severe trial. Sir Arthur, however, though resolute not to abandon the line of communication which he had chosen, nor to move to any great distance from his ships, did, at the earnest desire of Freire to save, according to his report, a magazine of provisions collected for the British, march upon Leria. The English advanced guard moved from their ground upon the Mondego on the 9th of August, and was followed on the 10th by the main body of the army. Upon this wide theatre of fierce and sanguinary warfare was now first heard the careless whistle, and the cheerful laughter of the English soldier. He, stranger alike to the violent and vindictive feelings which animated the invader and the inhabitant, marched gaily forward, looking for a combat as for some brave pastime; and panting to prove at home that the favoured jacket of blue covered not bolder hearts than those that beat proudly under his own crimson uniform.

The British advance entered Leria on the 10th; and the magazine collected for them was seized by the Portuguese under Freire, who there joined the English, to whom no distribution was made. This first movement cut the line of communication between the divisions of general Loison coming from Abrantes, and Laborde, who was marching from Lisbon, with a view to unite their forces at Leria: to effect their junction, Loison was now compelled to circuitous and forced marches.

As serious hostilities closely impended, the Portuguese began to fear the risk of an action, and

the consequences of defeat: French troops were thought invincible: of English nothing was known, and not much was expected. The junta of Oporto and Freire understood each other. The Portuguese general not only resolved not to advance beyond Leria, but, having already appropriated the store of provisions which had been avowedly destined for the British by the bishop of Oporto, who had promised to feed them, he asked a supply from the English commander. This demand was met by a strong remonstrance; but it was in vain that sir Arthur Wellesley, who readily penetrated the secret* of Freire's reluctance, urged him to act by the side of the English in the expected battle. Neither an appeal to his honour, nor an imputation against his patriotism and spirit, had any effect upon his resolve. At last, however, by an earnest and conciliatory tone, sir Arthur induced him to follow the British line of march, and to be guided in his future course by the issue of the first engagement. Freire also consented, at the desire and by the counsel of colonel Trant, a military agent, who had great influence over the Portuguese, to place 1400 infantry, and 250 cavalry, under the orders of sir Arthur. The political importance of their co-operation, and their presence in the first battle fought upon their own soil, will be readily understood. Junot, the French commander-in-chief, quitted Lisbon, with his re-

* If the British were defeated, as he thought they might be, he would not stand committed, and might make terms for himself. If they conquered, he could, by remaining unconnected with the English army, better aid the views of the junta of Oporto, who aimed at the supreme authority.

serve, on the 15th; and on the 17th, pushing on in person, and leaving them to follow, he joined Loison at Alcoentre. In the mean time, sir Arthur Wellesley had arrived in presence of Laborde. On the 15th a French post at Brilos was attacked, and their pickets driven out of Obidos. The riflemen of the 95th and 60th had the honour of this first brush with the enemy; and were so eager in pursuit, as to be well nigh cut off; but general Spencer saved them. Two officers and twenty-seven men were killed and wounded in this skirmish. On the morrow sir Arthur surveyed the strong position of Laborde.

The romantic village of Roliça, with its vines, its olives, and quiet gardens, stands upon an eminence at the head of that valley, in the midst of which, distant about eight miles, rises the insulated hill of Obidos. In front of Roliça, upon a small plain, on the table land, the division of Laborde was drawn up in order of defence. The favourable points upon the hills on either side, and in the valley below, were occupied by his posts. Behind him, one mile to the rear, the steep and difficult ridge of Zambugeira offered a second position, parallel to the first, and of uncommon strength. The mountains, which rose towering beyond, are of that chain which stretches from the bank of the Tagus to the shore of the Atlantic, and terminates in the naked and lofty rock of Cintra. The valley leading from the old Moorish fort of Obidos to the pleasant village of Roliça is walled in on the left by rude heights, rising each above the other, till they are finally lost in the dark summits of the

Sierra de Baragueda. To preserve his communication with Loison, and to avoid exposing the line of Torres Vedras and Mafra, Laborde was compelled to await in this position the assault of the British troops. His force was only 5000, but it was advantageously posted,—aware of the importance of the position as of its strength, confident in the talent of their general, and their own courage.

Early upon the 17th the English moved out of Obidos, and sir Arthur Wellesley disposed them in three columns of attack. That on the left was conducted by general Ferguson along the lower ridges of the Sierra de Baragueda, and destined to turn the right of Laborde's position, and interpose between him and the division Loison expected from Rio Mayor to his support. Six guns, forty horsemen, and 4800 bayonets, moved under this general.

One thousand Portuguese infantry and fifty of their cavalry formed a little column on the right, which, moving through the village of St. Amias, menaced the left flank of the enemy. This body was led by colonel Trant.

Nine thousand men marched up the valley directly upon the enemy. The brigades of generals Hill, Nightingale, Cotton, Craufurd, and Fane, with 150 British light horse, 250 Portuguese cavalry, and 400 light troops of that nation, composed this formidable column. With this, the main body of his little army, rode sir Arthur Wellesley. He extended the riflemen of Fane's brigade among the hills to the left, as the troops advanced, and driving away the French skirmishers connected the column of Ferguson with his centre. From his first position

on the plain, near Roliça, Laborde was soon driven. The brisk attack of the brigades of Hill and Nightingale, supported by the cavalry and guns, and rendered easy by the skilful disposition which had caused both the flanks of the enemy to be menaced at the same moment, determined his retreat. Laborde, covered by his steady cavalry, moved rapidly, and in order, to his second line of defence, the ridge of Zambugeira, one of great strength, and not a mile in extent.

The like dispositions of attack were continued. Generals Ferguson and Fane marched on among the mountains upon the enemy's right flank, colonel Trant still moving in menace of their left. The front of their strong position was assailed by the brigades of Hill and Nightingale. The face of these heights is rugged, and their summit only to be gained by steep and difficult pathways, which wind among rocks and briars, in those rude ravines, by which in winter the waters rush down their precipitous sides to the vales below. The quick fire of our advancing skirmishers rung and rattled among these rocky hollows; and the goatherds looked down in wonder from the far Sierras, upon the white clouds of battle, which hid from their view the shouting combatants, while the brave array of the reserve, the scarlet uniforms, and the unaccustomed battle cries, told them that their oppressors had met a foe, and that their bleeding villages had found a friend. Laborde drew back a little upon his left as the English advanced, but held his right with obstinate courage, hoping every instant for the appearance of Loison.

The 9th and 29th British pushed up two of these ravine pathways with such eager rapidity, that they reached the summit of the ridge before the flanks of the enemy were shaken. The head of the 29th regiment, in particular, issued from the ravine, in that narrow and loose order in which men of necessity come forth from such ground. Before they had time to form, a French battalion, covered by a skreen of the wild shrubs which clothe these passes, had poured in its fire, and was among them with the bayonet. Lake, the colonel, a brave officer, was slain, with many of his men; and the major and some fifty or sixty more of the same wing were made prisoners: but it was not because their advanced wing had been thus taken at a disadvantage by a prepared and posted enemy; it was not because they saw a field-officer and numbers of their men prisoners, and had to press over the bodies of fallen comrades to re-establish the battle, that the gallant 29th hesitated: the rally was immediate; the remnant of this brave corps being joined by the 9th won back their dead and wounded, and sustained the repeated and fierce assaults of Laborde's division with unshaken constancy, till, being supported by other troops from the rear, they had the proud joy of seeing Laborde, now, too, menaced on his flank, again retire. The French general conducted his retreat with great firmness and judgment. He attempted to stand again near the village of Zambugeira, but was too weak to sustain the weight of the British attack, and leaving three guns upon the field, and the road to Torres Vedras open, he retired by the narrow pass of Ruña, marching all night to

gain the position of Montechique. The loss of the French was 600 killed and wounded: among the latter was Laborde himself. Two lieutenant-colonels, and 500 killed, wounded, and prisoners, was the loss on the part of the British. It was not possible, from the nature of the ground, that the English could avail themselves of their superior numbers. Scarce 4000 men were actually engaged with the enemy. This day should be long and honourably remembered by every British soldier; for it was the first action of the memorable war in the Peninsula, in which British forces encountered the legions of Bonaparte.

Immediately after the engagement, which closed about four o'clock in the afternoon, sir Arthur took up a position a little in advance of the field of battle. It was reported to him the same evening, that the divisions of generals Anstruther and Ackland were off the coast; he therefore moved the next day to Lourinham, on the road to which his right had rested through the night. He moved on the 19th to Vimeiro, with a view to favour the landing of general Anstruther, and from thence he detached troops to cover the march of that general's brigade. Owing to these precautions the junction was securely effected, and the menace of a large body of French dragoons gave little interruption; but the enemy's strength in cavalry enabled him to confine the English to their lines; and no certain information of the dispositions and movements of Junot could be obtained. His force in the field was estimated at about 14,000. On the night of the 20th the brigade of general Ackland was also put on shore.

The landing of these troops in the bay of Maceira was attended with great risk and difficulty; and with officers less skilful than those of the British navy, and men less brave and energetic than British seamen, could not have been effected. The beach of Maceira is open and sandy, and the Atlantic breaks upon it in a heavy surf. Many of the boats were swamped, and some of the men perished.

Reinforced by generals Anstruther and Ackland, sir Arthur Wellesley had now 16,000 effective men, and eighteen pieces of artillery. He resolved, by a forced march on the 21st, to turn the position of Torres Vedras; to push a strong advance to Mafra, and, seizing the strong heights within a short distance of that place, intercept the French line of march to Montechique. It was only a march of nine miles to Torres Vedras, and there was a road which led to it from the sea-coast. It was by this line sir Arthur would have advanced: he had communicated this project to sir Harry Burrard in writing, and had, at the same time, recommended that the division of general sir John Moore should disembark at the Mondego, and march to Santarem. These letters sir Harry Burrard found on his arrival at the Mondego; but, disapproving this plan, which proposed a double line of operations, he continued his course southward, and arrived in the bay of Maceira, in a frigate, on the eve of sir Arthur's projected blow against Junot. He received the report of that general, who went on board the vessel the moment she arrived to represent the state of the armies, and to urge the adoption of the offensive. Sir Harry Burrard would hear of no such movement

until the arrival of sir John Moore and the concentration of the whole force. Sir Arthur returned to the camp in disappointment; but a day of glory was nearer than he at the moment thought it. At midnight he was awakened to hear the report of a German officer of dragoons, who had come in with anxious haste to announce the approach of Junot with 20,000 men, and stated him to be within a league of the camp.

The general sent out patroles, directed increased vigilance and alertness on the part of all pickets and guards, but would not disturb his line.

It may be remarked, in passing, that no general ever received reports with such calm caution as sir Arthur Wellesley. Suddenly awaked, he would hear an alarming account from the front with a quiet, and, to many a bustling, intelligent officer, a provoking coldness, and turn again to his sleep as before. Few, if any, are the instances during the war of his putting the troops under arms by night, or disappointing them unnecessarily of one hour of repose. An hour before dawn, the British, when near an enemy, are always under arms. The sun rose upon them on the 21st of August, but discovered no hostile force in motion.

Vimeiro, a pretty village in a lovely and peaceful valley, through which the little river of Maceira gently flows, was the principal place in the British lines, and occupied by the park, the commissariat, and that noisy crowd of animals and followers which mark the presence of an army. It stands at the eastern extremity of some mountain heights which skreen it from the sea, and west of it, separ-

ated from them by a deep ravine, lie other heights; over these last the road passes to Lourinham. The cavalry and Portuguese lay behind the village on a plain, upon a plateau, on a steep insulated height; the brigades of Anstruther and Fane, with six guns, were immediately in front of Vimeiro. The right of the latter rested upon one extremity of this hill just above the river Maceira, and the left of Anstruther occupied a church and church-yard at the other. Here passed a road leading to the village. On the mountain that, commencing at the coast, rose to the right and rear of this plateau, and which at long range commanded it, were placed eight guns and five brigades of infantry. The range of heights to the west having no water was only occupied by pickets; but the right of these also commanded the plateau, and the road passing over its extreme edge.

About eight o'clock the enemy showed a picket of horse on the heights, towards Lourinham, and pushed forward his scouts; nearly at the same moment he was seen in all his strength, and in full march upon the road leading from Torres Vedras to Lourinham, and his object was evident. Four brigades from the mountain on the east crossed instantly in rear of the village, and crowned the heights on the west. As soon as two of them were formed, being disposed at right angles, with Anstruther and Fane in two lines facing to the left, the battle began. The brigade of Hill still remained upon the mountain in reserve; and one brigade and the Portuguese were placed upon a returning bend of the western heights at their extremity, thereby protecting the left and rear of the whole force. The French had 14,000

men, and twenty-three pieces of artillery. The infantry were in three divisions under Loison, Laborde, and Kellerman; general Margaron commanded 1300 horse. The principal column of the enemy, led by Laborde, advanced against the position in front of the village with the fury and the loud outcries of men resolved for victory: in vain the British guns poured death into their ranks: they moved on with a steady rapidity, and crowned the summit of the hill. Before a cool volley from the 50th, within twenty paces, their front rank fell; and as their column faltered with the shock, the firm bayonets of that brave regiment were already in the midst of them, and they were driven down with great bloodshed.

The brigade of Fane, which was attacked at the same moment, bravely repulsed the assailing column. Upon this body, as it retired in confusion, the weak squadron of the 20th light dragoons, under colonel Taylor, made a lively charge, and completed their disaster; but the few English horsemen were in turn set upon by the strong cavalry of Margaron, and cut to pieces, their gallant colonel falling slain in the *mêlée*. There was a fierce struggle between the grenadiers of Kellerman's column of reserve and the British 43d, in a hot skirmish among the vineyards near the church: they drove back the advanced companies of that corps; but it rallied instantly, and, throwing itself upon the head of the column in a narrow ravine, it broke and routed them with the bayonet, sustaining itself a heavy loss. The discomfiture of these attacks in the centre was complete; but no army can be destroyed, however beaten, that

has got protection for its fugitives in a superior cavalry. Had two of the regiments of the dragoons then kept idle in the barrack-yards at home been present, the march to Torres Vedras would have been made, and Lisbon been our own. Brennier, who was to have attacked the British left, found their position inaccessible, owing to a deep and difficult ravine at its base, which he was not aware of, and in which he got disordered and delayed. Meanwhile general Solignac, with a brigade of Loison's division, turned this ravine, and fell upon the English left. He was met by the regiments under Ferguson, who bore down upon him with a close and heavy fire of musketry, and at last with the weapon of victory the bayonet.

They drove Solignac, and took six guns. General Ferguson was pressing his broken columns with some corps, while two of his regiments were halted near the captured guns. Brennier, meanwhile, came suddenly out of the ravine, which he had just cleared, and succeeded for a moment in repossessing himself of them. But the regiments did not retire far; only to a near vantage ground, from whence, pouring in a hot fire, they again charged, and again the guns were taken. Brennier was wounded and made prisoner. Ferguson, who had separated the two French brigades by his able and spirited movements, would have taken more than half the brigade of Solignac, if an order to halt had not arrested him in mid-career. The French re-formed instantly under cover of their cavalry, and retired in very tolerable order. It was the wish of sir Arthur Wellesley to press Junot closely with the five brigades on the left,

while those of Hill, Anstruther, and Fane, should march upon Torres Vedras, push to Montechique, and intercept all access to Lisbon. All the artillery of Junot that yet remained to him, and many thousand prisoners, would have been the probable fruit of this movement; but the heart big with accomplished victory, and granted desires, and swelling with new and bold hopes, and the head clear in its discernment, and strong in its decision, were now subjected to the commands of another. Sir Harry Burrard, who was present during the action, and had, from generosity and approbation, forborne all interference with the arrangements of the battle, now assumed the command, and, considering the proposed advance hazardous, directed the halt. All those circumstances of difficulty, which weigh upon a cautious and objective mind, decided sir Harry not to peril the certain and solid advantages just gained upon the, to him, doubtful chance of the complete and anticipated triumph. The enemy, he said, were strong in cavalry; the English had none! the artillery carriages were shaken to pieces, and might not stand the roads; while their horses were few and bad, and scarcely able to drag them forward. The French rallied quick, and had, perhaps, fresh troops among the woods and hollows in front. Upon distant heights, indeed, a body had been discovered by general Spencer. It appeared to him a risk, and though a brave and honourable officer, yet being no longer a young man, he decided against the onward march upon fair military reasons. Bitter as was the disappointment of sir Arthur Wellesley, still he was consoled by the thought that his own skill, seconded

admirably by the courage of his soldiers, had achieved a brilliant victory. A second time the imperial troops had been met, and, after efforts the most resolute and heroic, had been fairly and signally beaten, leaving thirteen guns, their wounded, and a vast number of prisoners. The charm which had palsied the hearts and arms of all Europe was now doubly broken. In the Peninsula Napoleon had found a people who hated without fearing him, and in the English his soldiers had encountered enemies who repelled their fiercest attacks or assailed their strongest posts with equal ardour and success. On the morning after the battle sir Hew Dalrymple arrived, and assumed the chief command; a most excellent and judicious officer; but, perhaps, it was scarcely possible for man to be placed in circumstances more difficult and trying. We record with irritation this quick and clumsy succession of commanders. The French, in safe possession of the unassailable position of Torres Vedras, and having the capital in their immediate power, as well as the fortresses of Almeida and Elvas, though beaten in the field by sir Arthur Wellesley, and hated by an insurgent people, were certainly in a condition to propose terms that should save to them their liberty and their arms. The general, Kellerman, presented himself at the British head-quarters; demanded a cessation of hostilities, and stated the readiness of Junot to evacuate Portugal upon a fair and honourable convention. Sir Hew Dalrymple acceded to this proposition; and sir Arthur concurred in the policy of now gaining by treaty those

advantages which, the golden opportunity having passed, force of arms could no longer effectually or speedily secure. Upon the expediency of some of the articles of this convention the commanders differed, but upon the general principle of the measure they agreed. While the convention was going forward, the reinforcements under sir John Moore landed in Maceira Bay. The feature of the treaty most remarkable to the future historian and to posterity will be this, that the nation to whose cause we had brought our succours was not in the person of any of its authorities, or of its public officers, military or civil, at first, either considered or consulted. The convention went distinctly to recognise that the French were the conquerors of Portugal, and as such, had been entitled to exercise all the rights of conquest. The Portuguese, by the fifth article of this notable treaty, saw the plunder of their country secured to their rapacious and cruel invaders, and they remonstrated against the terms of the convention with violence and anger. By the sixth article, all traitors and time-servers were to be protected from political persecution on account of their late conduct, and were left to hatch new treasons whenever the French should again return.

General Freire, and the bishop and junta of Oporto, sought to disturb these arrangements by open remonstrance and much secret intrigue, which it were alike uninteresting and tedious to detail. Emissaries from Oporto urged the populace of Lisbon to rise upon the French, who were now concentrated in that city, but lay there constantly upon the alert, as in the midst of enemies. The

judge of the people issued an inflammatory address, calling for a suspension of the treaty, and the Monteiro Mor, at the head of a levy of peasants, on the south bank of the Tagus, published a protest against the convention. Happily sir John Hope, being appointed to command Lisbon, took possession of the citadel on the 12th of September, and by judgment and firmness calmed the tumults and repressed those dangerous and terrible disorders which in the moment of vindictive confusion and total anarchy prevailed. The first division of the French army sailed on the 15th, and was followed by the second and third as soon after as transports could be provided. In the midst of all the angry excitement of the people of Lisbon, and though endeavours had been made to direct their indignation against the English, as friendly to the French, and indifferent to the losses they had sustained, and the sufferings they had undergone, the British troops were received with great warmth and cordiality. They viewed them as having avenged their wrongs in the blood of a battle, and hailed them as deliverers and friends.

After the departure of the French, the bishop of Oporto, and, at his instigation, the junta of that city, sought to possess themselves of the supreme power in Portugal, and were desirous that the seat of the government should be established at Oporto. This was most wisely and firmly resisted by sir Hew Dalrymple. A regency was established at Lisbon, and that capital and the country were at length restored to a state of confidence and tranquillity.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, sir Harry Burrard, and sir

Hew Dalrymple, were now recalled to England, where the public had been so clamorous against the convention, that a formal investigation of the matter was directed by the king; and a board of general officers was assembled at Chelsea for that purpose.

To the fifth article, especially, sir Arthur Wellesley objected; but the French, by plausible explanations and fair assurances, over-ruled these objections; and the manly integrity of the British generals made them incredulous of the extent of French cupidity and crime, till their shuffling evasions and impudent abstractions, on the eve of their departure, shamed and disgusted the honourable men of their army as much as the commissioners of our own. It is a real pleasure to be able to state, that there were French generals with this very army, who, in the last moments of their stay, when popular exasperation was loose against the troops, and when the language of abuse was fierce, and the threats of murder loud, could walk the streets in perfect safety, saluted and honoured by the people. The names of Travot, Charlot, Brennier, and many others, are on this honourable list.

The convention of Cintra was odious to the Portuguese people, and could not be otherwise, till, relieved of the presence of the French army, they had leisure to discover the solid advantages accruing from the treaty, and to ponder on the violence which the enemy might have exercised before they retired from Lisbon, had they been driven to desperation by the rejection of their terms.

The last division of the French troops embarked

amid the curses and execrations of the people. From the decks of their vessels they heard the songs of triumph; and the blaze of the illuminated city, shining far out upon the harbour, surrounded them with a light by which to read in each other's faces their vexation. There was yet some troublesome hesitation on the frontiers. This was owing entirely to the intrigues of the bishop of Oporto, and the obstinate interference of Galluzzo, the Spanish general, who refused to acknowledge the convention, and invested fort La Lippe. At length, however, the difficulty was removed. The forts of Elvas, La Lippe, and Almeida, were evacuated: not a Frenchman was left in Portugal.

CHAP. IX.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY RETURNS TO ENGLAND TO ATTEND THE COURT OF ENQUIRY. — PROCEEDS AGAIN TO PORTUGAL THE FOLLOWING SPRING. — HIS RECEPTION AT LISBON. — RETROSPECT OF SPANISH AFFAIRS.

THE ability and prowess of sir Arthur Wellesley in the brilliant actions which preceded the convention of Cintra had so confirmed and established him in favour with the people of England, that nothing tended more to allay the irritation of the public mind at that measure than the circumstance of his being one of the parties concerned. When they heard him give it as his deliberate opinion, that the convention was from the relative state and position of the two armies a measure expedient and wise, the reflecting paused in their hasty objections, and soon droppèd the mistaken and indignant tones of their first censure. Some, incapable of calmly examining or truly judging any question of a military nature, railed on. Justice, however, and moral feeling, had received so severe a blow in the triumph of rapine and of cunning, that perhaps the honest hearts throughout all England felt a painful regret at these proceedings. It will yet, and perhaps for ever, remain a question, whether this course, in which from a consideration of its expediency on the evening of the 22d sir Arthur (with two officers senior

to him in the camp) concurred, would have been by himself adopted under the same circumstances, had the entire control of measures, and the sole daring of attempt, and the sole glory of success, and the sole responsibility for failure, rested with him. It is true that the French army on the evening of the 22d had a formidable position between the British and Lisbon. They had the means of retiring from that position to others in front of that city, and, finally, of crossing the Tagus into Alemtejo, with a view to the occupation in strength of the forts of Elvas, La Lippe, and eventually Almeida. The position at Santarem never having been occupied as proposed by sir Arthur, there were no means to prevent, and no increase of numbers could have prevented, them from effecting these objects. They were, however, in a very embarrassed state; they would not have remained long at Lisbon, but they might have lingered a day too long. A trip, a blunder, a false step, and they might yet have been exposed to defeat and ruin. Though there never was a leader who more warily calculated all probabilities, and more happily adjusted the weight assignable to each, than sir Arthur Wellesley, yet neither was there ever a man more prompt and ready for the peril of a throw. But he was always for fluttering the Volscians *alone:* "alone I did it," was the reflection he ever coveted. Of the members of the court of enquiry, four approved, and three disapproved, of the convention.

It was not till the month of April in the following year that sir Arthur Wellesley again landed in Portugal. He was received at Lisbon with the greatest enthusiasm. The very sight of a man who

had already fought and conquered the enemies of Portugal upon the soil of Portugal animated all ranks with hope and joy: the regency nominated him the marshal-general of their army: the soldiers gazed upon him with confidence; and the people followed him wherever he appeared with shouts and *vivas*. The spirit of war and resistance was alive all over the Peninsula, and the genius given in this our age, to direct it to the great end of a final and full deliverance, stood again among its brave inhabitants.

To make the difficulties of sir Arthur Wellesley apparent, and the story of his achievements complete, it is necessary to relate the events which had befallen the countries of Spain and Portugal during his absence from the theatre of war. In looking back upon the struggles of Spain, and thinking upon her powerful opponent, her disasters excite no surprise. Southey has observed with truth, that *during revolutions, discipline is the last thing which a soldier learns*. Certainly, during a revolution, where a soil is half covered by invaders; where "the whole structure of society is shaken to pieces;" where there are no officers of experience; no non-commissioned officers of authority; no generals; no staff; that he should learn it, is impossible: how is he to be instructed? where can be his place of security for his school of discipline? and where his leisure to attain it? If the reader will picture to himself a vast body of local militia suddenly assembled in England, with officers of unspeakably less intelligence than those of an English local militia, and quite as little experience; with a system of movement old, formal,

cumbrous; and slow; men half-clothed, half-armed, and commanded by proud and obstinate generals of no experience; he will see many of such armies as actually met in battle the disciplined and brave conquerors of Germany under the guidance of leaders alike distinguished by their talents and their exploits.

Upon the victory of Baylen, Joseph Bonaparte abandoned Madrid, taking with him, as king of Spain and the Indies, the valuables of the palace and the jewels of the crown. A central and superior junta now assumed the government, and was established at Aranjuez. The patriotic troops all over Spain were either assembling or moving, at the will of their respective generals, without any defined object, or the least combination: 12,000 men under Llamas marched from Murcia to Madrid. St. Marc with his Valencians, and the baron de Versage with his Arragonese, did, however, unite their forces, and moved to Zaragoza. Verdier and Lefebvre broke up the siege on their approach, and retired to Tudela. The Spaniards followed them, and occupied that place.

The army of Andalusia was a clothed, and, in so far, equipped and efficient body of 30,000 men, with artillery. It was a month before a division of this force entered Madrid: the other divisions lay behind it, at Toledo, in La Mancha, and in the Sierra Morena. It had been kept idle and delayed by the provincial junta of Seville, and, thus distributed, it was now to be fed. The infantry army of Estremadura was a raw levy; there were, however, 4000 horse in this province. Galluzzo, the governor,

would not part with this body of cavalry, or suffer it to join Castaños at Madrid. The army of Blake, defeated at Rio Seco, lay behind the mountains of Astorga: to his old reserve he had added a new levy; and 30,000 men, the greater part *peasants, in peasant clothing*, mustered round him. Cuesta, with 1500 horse and 8000 peasants, was at Salamanca, quarrelling with the provincial junta, and Blake was quarrelling with him. The generals of the different armies, and the juntas of the different provinces, were disputing with each other for influence and precedency, and each occupied with their own plans. At this time 3000 French horsemen were sweeping the rich and fertile banks of the Douro for corn and money; while Joseph Bonaparte was at Vittoria, at the head of 50,000 of those French troops, of whom Napoleon had said, "The whole of the Spanish forces are not capable of beating twenty-five thousand French in a reasonable position." The truth of which strong remark any officer who may have seen at that period, or at a much later, one Spanish battalion in movement, (for we speak not of the simple, though more difficult, combinations of brigade and division,) can well understand.

The supreme junta, which had entered Madrid, were at once pompous and weak; presumptuous and timid. They projected a military board to regulate the operations of their armies, and chose Castaños for a president, his seat to be taken "when the enemy was driven across the frontier." While they vainly considered this "driving across the frontier" to be the certain consequence of

the effort, by no foresight, by no exertion, did they lay the foundation of such a result. The troops were naked, and the soldiers left, oftentimes after long and severe marches, "to feed upon their own high thoughts," a diet better suited to the shadowy and lean knight of La Mancha than to men destined for the rude shock of battle with the grenadiers of France. To crush these brave, betrayed, and unhappy levies, was the object of Napoleon. We transcribe his preparations from the pages of the historian Napier, in his own vigorous language.

"Sudden and prompt in execution, he prepared for one of those gigantic efforts which have stamped this age with the greatness of antiquity.

"His armies were scattered over Europe. In Italy, in Dalmatia, on the Rhine, the Danube, the Elbe; in Prussia, Denmark, Poland, his legions were to be found. Over that vast extent, above 500,000 disciplined men maintained the supremacy of France. From those bands he drew the imperial guards, the select soldiers of the warlike nation he governed, and the terror of the other continental troops. The veterans of Jena, of Austerlitz, of Friedland, reduced in number, but of confirmed hardihood, were collected into one corps, and marched towards Spain. A host of cavalry, unequalled for enterprise and knowledge of war, were also directed against that devoted land, and a long train of gallant soldiers followed, until 200,000 men, accustomed to battle, had penetrated the gloomy fastnesses of the western Pyrenees. 40,000 men of

inferior reputation, drawn from the interior of France, from Naples, from Tuscany, and from Piedmont, were assembled at Perpignan. The march of this multitude was incessant; and as they passed the capital, Napoleon, neglectful of nothing which could excite their courage and swell their military pride, addressed to them one of those nervous orations that shoot like fire to the heart of a real soldier. In the tranquillity of peace it may seem inflated, but on the eve of battle it is thus a general should speak: —

"'Soldiers! after triumphing on the banks of the Vistula and the Danube, with rapid steps you have passed through Germany. This day, without a moment of repose, I command you to traverse France. Soldiers! I have need of you! the hideous presence of the leopard contaminates the Peninsula of Spain and Portugal. In terror he must fly before you. Let us bear our triumphal eagles to the pillars of Hercules; there also we have injuries to avenge. Soldiers! you have surpassed the renown of modern armies, but have you yet equalled the glory of those Romans, who in one and the same campaign were victorious upon the Rhine and the Euphrates, in Illyria and upon the Tagus? A long peace, a lasting prosperity, shall be the reward of your labours. A real Frenchman could not, ought not, to rest until the seas are free and open to all. Soldiers! all that you have done, all that you will do, for the happiness of the French people and for my glory, shall be eternal in my heart.'

"Thus saying, he caused his troops to proceed to the frontiers of Spain."

There was a campaign in Spain, however, before the emperor with the greater part of these forces entered that country. In the latter part of September the French army on the Ebro, having received some reinforcements, amounted to upwards of 90,000 men present under arms. Three Spanish corps, denominated the armies of the right, the centre, and the left, were opposed to this force. They amounted in all to 75,000, ill armed and ill provided. Palafox commanded that of the right on the Arragon river; Blake, with that of the left, was posted at Reynosa, near the sources of the Ebro; Castaños commanded the army of the centre.

The Spaniards were ill posted. They were acting without concert; their wings were widely separated; and either flank was exposed to the attack of superior numbers, from an enemy quick in movement, much stronger in cavalry, and having the chord of the half circle for their line of operation. Blake, with the army of the left, commenced this campaign, by breaking up from Reynosa on the 17th of September. His object was to raise the provinces of Biscay and Guipuscoa. One of his divisions succeeded in penetrating to Bilbao; but, by the great force and rapid combinations of the enemy, he was almost immediately compelled to retire. On the 12th of October Blake again attacked Bilbao with 15,000 men, and drove the enemy up the valley of Durango as far as Zornosa, who being there reinforced by the division of Verdier checked the pursuit. On the 9th of this month the veteran division of Spanish

troops from the Baltic landed at St. Ander, under the marquis of Romana, and marched to join the army of Blake. The Asturians destined to act with the army of the left halted at Villarcayo, and Blake held the position at the head of that valley between Frias and Valmaceda.

The columns of the grand army destined by Napoleon for the subjugation of Spain now began to cover the road from Bayonne to Vittoria. During the quick and quiet concentration of these mighty forces Blake was never disturbed; Romana's battalions were moving up slowly to Bilbao; the Estremadurans were marching upon Burgos, and, animated by a hope which prudence should have discouraged, Blake resolved to advance and attack Zornosa. He took with him 17,000 men. The French general Merlin abandoned the town on the 24th, and on the 25th fell back to Durango. By his strange, faulty, and presumptuous dispositions, Blake found himself with this half of his army in a position about five miles beyond Zornosa on the 31st, without any artillery, in the presence of 25,000 French led by the duke of Dantzic. He could not resist its onset; he could not reply to its artillery; his troops, soon thrown into confusion, were driven (but never without disputing the ground and leaving upon it pale dead) from one position to another, and at last retired in haste and disorder to Bilbao. The next day Blake was in position at Nava, behind the Salcedon. On the 4th, learning the danger of Acevedo's division, which was intercepted in its push for the river Salcedon by the French general Villatte, Blake was again in the field, and had a severe

combat with Villatte, who retreated, leaving a gun and much baggage in the hands of the Spaniards, and having sustained a severe loss of men.

Blake now once more resolved to attack Bilbao, and to attempt a junction with Palafox and the army of Arragon in the rear of the French forces, — a wonderful instance of obstinacy and infatuation. His soldiers were, at this time, bivouacking among the cold mountains without cloaks, without shoes or sandals, without any regular supplies, and seldom obtaining a ration of bread, wine, or spirits. While their brave but blundering commander was leading them in this condition towards Bilbao, two corps of French, amounting to 50,000 men, were marching upon his front, and a third, having turned his right, was already on his rear. The Spanish general fell in with the advanced guard of the fourth corps of the French army, and had a warm action with it; and learning here more of the enemy's movements, he retired two marches upon Espinosa. Here he was attacked on the 10th by the corps of marshal Victor. On this day Romana's infantry was beaten from its ground; but being reinforced by another division, rallied and continued the fight with spirit. The wood, however, and the ridge of hills where these troops were engaged, remained at night-fall in possession of the French. The Spanish right contended with more vigour and better success, and were gaining ground, when darkness put an end to the combat. The Spanish generals St. Roman and Riquielmè received their death-wounds on this day. The next morning Blake was again attacked. The French fell with fresh forces upon

the first division of his own troops and upon the Asturians. The rapid succession of casualties among the generals of the Asturian brigades (for three fell at the very opening of the battle) was fatally confusing. The Asturians fled: the first division soon gave way; and the centre and right, after a short show of resistance, being seized with the contagious panic, broke and hurried across the Trueba in disordered crowds. His artillery and baggage lost, his army routed and dispersed, Blake himself reached Reynosa with the wreck of his force; a body of only 7000 men. Numbers were slain, numbers made prisoners: among these last, the greater part of Romana's troops, who were sent immediately into France. These men being already familiar with the north of Europe, not having been in Spain at the exciting moment when the patriots rose, and viewing the French military service with no particular dislike, enlisted under the French eagles, and were marched northwards again. The bulk of the peasantry of the late levies threw away their arms, and returned to their homes disheartened and desponding.

Upon the 13th the enemy again fell upon Blake: he received and resisted their attack with courage, and made good his retreat with 5000 men to Arnedo, in the mountains of Asturias. Here the marquis of Romana joined him, and took command of the brave unfortunates who yet rallied around the patriot standards, the feeble remnant of the army of the left. The Spanish army* of the condè

* Some old regiments and some Spanish and Walloon guards were with this army, but they had none of them, when com-

de Belvedere, amounting to 11,000 infantry, 1150 horse, and thirty pieces of artillery, and encumbered rather than assisted by 7000 or 8000 armed peasants without any organisation whatever, was attacked and overthrown. Of this action it is enough to say, that two veteran divisions of French infantry were in the field under the generals Mouton and Bonnet, as also a brigade of light cavalry under Lasalle, and all the heavy cavalry under Bessieres. 2500 Spaniards were slain, twenty guns, six pairs of colours, and 900 men, were taken on the field. There was present in this battle a battalion of students, volunteers from the universities of Salamanca and Leon.* "The youths whom patriotism had brought to the field could not be frightened from it by danger. They fell in their ranks, and their deaths spread mourning through many a respectable family in Spain." Peace to them: they are gone into "a world of order."

Napoleon had from Vittoria directed all these grand movements. The remains of Belvedere's army rallied in the pass of Somosierra.

The army of the centre under Castaños, reduced in numbers and ill disciplined, was the next marked for destruction. On the heights above Tudela this army was drawn up for battle, and, of course, for defeat. It numbered 45,000 men, with upwards of forty guns, and occupied a position on a range of low hills ten miles in extent; Tudela forming the right, Taranzona the left of the ground they had chosen.

pared to the troops of France, any thing that deserves the name of discipline.

* Sir Walter Scott. Life of Napoleon.

They lay in separate bodies without intermediate posts. Marshal Lasnes appeared in front of this weakly posted force on the morning of the 23d of October with 30,000 infantry, 5000 cavalry, and sixty pieces of artillery: he immediately attacked them. The Arragonese upon the heights above Tudela fought so stoutly with the division of general Morlot, as to check and force it back at the commencement of this battle; but the centre of this long and feeble position being forced by general Maurice Mathieu, and Lefebvre following him with his numerous cavalry, the right was turned, disordered, and could resist no longer. Palafox with his Arragonese and the centre made for Zaragoza with all speed. The three divisions at Taranzona had not been engaged, when La Peña, who had behaved most handsomely, was forced back upon them with his division. All four began to retire in tolerable order, but the enemy were soon on them with their fire and with cavalry: a tumbril in their ranks blew up: amid the confusion and cries of Treason! a panic spread among them, and the field of battle was on all sides abandoned; thirty pieces of artillery, and 8000 killed, wounded, and prisoners, remaining with the French. Luckily 15,000 got clear away to Zaragoza; and Castaños himself rallied more than two divisions at Calatayud on the second day after the battle. The heart is sick in recording successes, that, being without glory, excite no admiration, and defeats which, being without disgrace, move neither wonder nor indignation.

The only barrier now between Napoleon and Madrid was the pass of Somosierra; and a small en-

campment at Sepulveda covered the road leading to Segovia. At this last post the Spaniards beat back the French who attacked, and caused them an admitted loss of fifty or sixty men; but after the affair, being panic-struck, they abandoned the post they had just successfully defended, and fled to Segovia. This was not unaccountable: — the truth is, they had been so often deceived, betrayed, beaten; had so often, in the moment of a fancied success, found their positions turned, and their commanders out-manœuvred, that their confidence in every thing, but their own individual hearts and arms, when, man to man, they could actually meet their foe at no real or suspected disadvantage, was shaken; that this hour they would fight and the next fly, and the next fight again, as their confidence in present circumstances rose or fell. To-day they were running, terrified like cowards, to-morrow the very same men were fighting like heroes. The strong pass of the Somosierra was held by 10,000 men under general St. Juan. They were well posted, and had sixteen pieces of artillery, commanding and sweeping the road, which ascended the mountain. Three French battalions attacked the right, three the left of this position, and a strong column marched along the road with six guns. The infantry pushed up the sides of the mountain right and left, keeping up a hot and lively fire. The infantry on the road, checked by the Spanish guns, were making little progress: a thick fog and the smoke of the fire hung upon the ascent. Napoleon was present: observing this, and knowing how great was the dread that in all the late battles his ca-

valry had inspired among the raw and unsteady soldiers of Spain, he directed the Polish lancers of his guard to charge up the causeway, and take the Spanish artillery. The foremost squadron lost several men and horses by the first fire they received, but, rallied by their commander Krazinski, covered by the smoke and fog, and in part by the ground over which they moved, they rode boldly forwards, came upon the guns sword in hand, and seized the battery. They were galled a little as they went up by the musketry of the infantry, posted right and left, but effected this gallant exploit with a dauntless valour. Cavalry upon them had always, hitherto, been the signal to the Spaniards that they were already turned, and to be sacrificed to the sabres of the horsemen in their confusion. It operated even upon this strong ground just as it had elsewhere. The same aspect of things brought up the same associations, and the whole force was shamefully beaten, and ran away at the wild charge of a regiment of horse.

Madrid was in alarm and anarchy, desirous to resist but incapable of defence, when the emperor appeared before the city, preceded by three heavy divisions of cavalry, and followed by a mass of infantry and a numerous artillery. His first summons of the city, at noon, on the 2d of December, was treated with defiance. His second, at midnight, had no better success. The French infantry now carried some houses by assault: a battery of thirty guns opened upon the Retiro; another threw shells from the opposite quarter. Villatte's division stormed the Retiro the next morning, carried it, and

established themselves in all the advantageous posts near. The town was now summoned a third time. Morla and another officer came out to treat. He returned with Napoleon's decision — Madrid must surrender or perish. The poor and the peasantry would still have resisted, and the firing on both sides still continued. At last Morla and Castel Franco prepared a capitulation. Castellar, the captain-general, refused to sign it, and withdrew with his troops and guns, (6000, and 16 pieces of artillery,) by the side of the place not then invested. Morla was neither a brave nor true Spaniard; but whether he conducted the surrender of Madrid treacherously or not the city could not have resisted. On the morning of the 4th it surrendered. Orders were issued by Napoleon to preserve the strictest discipline among the troops; and a soldier of his own guard was shot in the great square of Madrid for plundering. The Spaniards were disarmed and the city silenced. Napoleon now exercised all the right of conquest. A body of nobles, clergy, and the public authorities of Madrid, waited on him at Chamartin, and presented an address. To this he replied in one of those orations, so eminently characteristic of him. There was a deal about England; and among other matter, a promise to drive the English armies from the Peninsula. His own, at this period, in Spain, amounted to 330,000 infantry and 60,000 horses, 200 pieces of field artillery, and an immense reserve. Such was his muster-roll, after deducting sick, detachments, garrisons, and posts of communication; and after providing nearly 80,000 men for Catalonia and the

siege of Zaragoza, he had 180,000 men and 40,000 horses disposable for any plan of operations he chose. The Spanish armies were already overthrown: a few thousand men, in the most wretched order, were with the duke of Infantado at Cuenca. Five thousand of a new levy were in the passes of the Sierra Morena. Galluzzo with 6000 men had just been defeated at Almaraz, and driven from the defence of the Tagus. Romana was near Leon with 18,000 men, of whom only 5000 were armed at all, and none in a state of discipline or efficiency for the field.

A British army, numerically feeble, and neither supplied, supported, or informed, was the only hostile body of true soldiers still in the field, and these had been only at a late and unhappy moment brought forward.

The English ministers tardily and doubtingly made the venture of an effort in the north of Spain. That which, done earlier, and with decision, might have been, at least, hopeful in its results, if not brilliant, directed at the time it was, no talents and no courage could possibly have conducted to a happy conclusion.

CHAP. X.

THE CAMPAIGN OF SIR JOHN MOORE.

It was upon the 6th of October that sir John Moore first received the order of the English ministers to enter Spain.

An army of 35,000 men was to be placed under his command. Of these 25,000 were to be immediately taken from the troops already in Portugal, and 10,000 were to be sent from England to the coast of Gallicia direct.

In twenty days from the receipt of his instructions the general had completed his arrangements; the columns were already on their march, and the head-quarters had quitted Lisbon. When it is considered that supplies and transports were to be provided, equipments completed, the corps selected, and the army organised anew in divisions and brigades, and all this in *Portugal* and among the *Portuguese*, it will be seen that nothing but the most ardent zeal, and the greatest possible exertion, could so soon have accomplished this important object. Had the like zeal and the like exertion, informed by clear views and directed to great aims, been manifested at home, 60,000 British soldiers should at that hour have been descending from the mountains of Gallicia, or traversing the plains of Leon.

With the main body of his army sir John Moore marched to Salamanca by Almeida; and it being

reported to him that the roads on that route were impracticable for artillery, he sent his guns, his cavalry, and a small column of infantry, under sir John Hope, by the valley of the Tagus. They were to move by Talavera de la Reyna, and to join him by the royal road which traverses the Guadarama mountains. He afterwards made the mortifying discovery, by personal observation, that his artillery could have accomplished the march by Almeida. But it is one of the trials of an English general, that a good military survey of the intended theatre of war is never to be found or furnished from any public office at home. England has no department or bureau to help a general in these matters: he must know every thing, and do every thing unassisted; even without money he must provide food and contentment, and see both the troops and the followers of his army in long arrear.

Sir John Moore entered Salamanca on the 13th of November. Sir David Baird, with 10,000 men, was moving from Corunna to join him; and the column of sir John Hope was pursuing its devious route with the same object.

The 23d of November arrived before the successive divisions of sir John's own corps were concentrated at Salamanca. This army, in a high state of health and efficiency, of a discipline not often surpassed, and of a spirit to be daunted by no enemy, arrived upon the soil of Spain, burning with desire for battle, and in all the confidence of victory. They enjoyed for a while their rest in Salamanca, deeming it but an allowed refreshment necessary to the present concentration of the force,

with a view to future operations in the field. While they were thus joyous, careless, and full of hope, their leader was weighed down and oppressed by the many and severe perplexities of his situation. No plan of operations had been given him; and such information as had been forwarded with his instructions relative to the state of Spain, and of her armies, he soon discovered to be false. In a few points, indeed, it had been founded on the slender support of a little truth; but the state of affairs, never one tenth so bright or promising as it had been represented, was at the actual moment changed very materially for the worse. He had come to support the armies of Blake and Belvedere: they were already destroyed. He had come expecting to find a people of one heart and will, enthusiastic in their own cause, and full of all the noble energy of action:—he found a people in the plains of Leon impoverished and depressed.

He found among the upper classes of society the timid, the interested, and the vain; some fearing to lose, others eager to gain, and a few, and those miserably qualified, ambitious to shine. He found the common people an ungovernable race of wilful men; now going forth to fight, and now dispersing to their homes, just as the caprice of the hour affected them. Avaricious dealers and contractors, meddling priests and petty authorities, full of ignorance and trickery, many of them double-faced intriguers, were not wanting. To control these discordant elements, there was not one leading or master mind in the whole kingdom, nor one powerful and acknowledged council to unite them wisely,

either in fear or affection, to one end. Some were distracted by the duties of their callings, some by their treasure or their families; and human nature was exhibiting itself in all those strange and contradictory varieties, which times of helpless trouble and bewildering confusion always elicit.

Sir John Moore found no armies to support, no generals with whom to concert measures, no government with which to correspond, no intelligence on which he could rely: in addition to these perplexities, he was without magazines, and (thanks to ministers) without money in the military chest to form them.

In Leon and the two Castiles, the people, though patriotic in heart, were, from the open nature of their country, defenceless, and had, consequently, less activity, because they had no chance of effectually protecting their naked villages from the cavalry of the enemy. They could, and did furnish men to the armies in the field; they gave money; they gave prayers for Spain; and, when the cavalry of the enemy rode into their open market-places, they yielded up their corn with eyes that scowled, and lips that closed in curses.

The general found himself and his army reproached and vilified by the ignorant population of Salamanca and its district. "Why," said they, "why don't you advance, and fight the French, as the Spaniards have done?" And the very men who fled from the fields in which their armies had sustained defeat, amid the mortifications of flight, still retaining the memory of a front offered to the foe, and of a short though vain contention, held the

same tone of reproof. They had witnessed the courage of the French troops, and the skill of the French generals, and judged that the English were held in inactivity by fear, or by a secret design of abandoning the cause of Spain.

From the moment that the eyes of Moore were opened to the actual state of the Spanish people in these provinces, and to the fate of their armies, he knew that, sooner or later, retreat would be inevitable; and his judgment told him that the line of his retreat should be by Ciudad Rodrigo upon Portugal, and that to effect it in good order the movement should no longer be delayed. It is to be regretted that, having deliberately formed this judgment, he did not at once act upon it. He might have issued a proclamation to the Spaniards, declaring to them the naked truth, concerning the fate of their own armies, and setting forth the wisdom and the necessity of his present retreat, with a view to render them more effectual assistance at a future period. For this he would no doubt have had to endure a storm of reproaches, furious but not lasting; for the prudence of the wise leader is never long confounded with the irresolution of a weak capacity or the timidity of a failing heart.

Mr. Frere, the English minister, was his only medium of communication with the supreme junta, which then directed the affairs of Spain. The authority of this junta was nowhere acknowledged beyond the precincts of the city where they sat; neither was it deserving of any influence, seeing the little which it exercised was for evil and not for good. The British envoy, deceived himself,

was unconsciously representing matters as they were not, and urging movements in advance as a duty; while the prescient mind of Moore could see nothing in such a course but disaster and destruction. Never, perhaps, was a general placed in a position of greater difficulty, or in circumstances more perplexing and harassing to a noble spirit.

The people of England had their eyes fixed upon him, with expectations of a nature to the full as extravagant as those of the Spaniards themselves; and sir John well knew that an appeal to the reason of excited and misjudging enthusiasts would be, in the first moment of disappointment, vain. He had already found it so in the case of Mr. Frere the minister, a man of warm temperament and ardent hopes, but of utter inexperience in all military affairs. Here, where he should have found the solid support of a grave, calm, deliberative wisdom, he was fretted by inconsiderate proposals, worrying importunities, and indelicate remonstrances. His generous spirit was overwhelmed; and his harassed and unhappy state of mind is thus evidenced in a letter to his brother: — "Pray for me," says the general, "that I may make right decisions: if I make bad ones, it will not be for want of consideration." He at one moment conceived the heroic notion of throwing himself into the heart of Spain, and rallying upon his small army that of Castaños and the wrecks of that of Belvedere; but this course became, after the battle of Tudela, too hazardous, he thought, to be risked.

Early in December general sir John Hope, after a march, the latter part of which, from the move-

ments of the French, was rendered difficult and insecure, but which was conducted with a most happy union of prudence and vigour, reached Alba de Tormes in safety. An intercepted dispatch from Berthier to Soult first acquainted sir John Moore with the fall of Madrid; and then it was that he hastily conceived the design of striking a blow at the corps of Soult, which lay apart and exposed at Saldanha on the Carrion. Sir John Moore had already made a forward movement to cover the advance of his stores, and the march of sir David Baird from Astorga, when the dispatch alluded to was brought to his head-quarters at Alaejos, on the 14th of December. The cavalry of lord Paget was at Toro, with two brigades of infantry; general Hope was at Torrecilla; general Charles Stewart's cavalry was at Rueda. At this place a squadron of the 18th hussars surprised a French post of infantry and horse, on the night of the 12th of December. Some were sabred, some taken, and a few effected their escape.

On the 18th the British head-quarters were at Castro Nuevo; from that place sir John Moore apprised Romana of his intended movement against Soult, and requested his co-operation. On the 20th all the British troops were concentrated — the infantry at Mayorga, the cavalry at Melgar Abaxo. This arm distinguished itself greatly on the march. They skirmished boldly with the enemy's horse, and took upwards of a hundred prisoners. With perfect confidence the smallest patrol of British cavalry would charge a body double its strength. The total of the English army, as now united, was 23,600 men,

with sixty pieces of artillery. Of this force 2278 were cavalry. Soult's corps of 16,000 infantry and 1200 horse lay upon the Carrion. Of these, more than 12,000 could be readily assembled to oppose the British; the main body of foot was at Saldanha, and the dragoons of general Debelle were at Sahagun. Sir John Moore, who well knew that the British army would become the immediate object of the emperor's attention, and that the enemy's masses were every where in motion, and would doubtless be directed at once upon his communications, felt all the danger of his attempt. But it was a solace to make some effort. He relied upon his own ability and promptness, and marched forward.

Upon the morning of the 21st lord Paget, at the head of 400 of the 15th hussars, came in presence of a line of 600 French dragoons, at Sahagun, and, after a few skilful manœuvres, charged and overthrew them. Many were sabred on the spot, and thirteen officers and one hundred and fifty men made prisoners. The English infantry occupied Sahagun. Romana, who had only 6000 men, and those in a miserable condition, remained at Mansilla; nor did he venture to advance. Sir John Moore was forced to halt the 22d and 23d for his supplies; but he planned a march during the night of the 23d, and an attack upon the French troops at Saldanha on the morning of the 24th. Already in the chill night were the English columns in motion towards the Carrion, warmed and cheered by the promise of battle, when such intelligence was brought to the general of the enemy's movements as compelled retreat.

Napoleon had been informed of Moore's advance on the 21st. On the evening of the 22d 50,000 men, under his immediate orders, were already at the foot of the Guadarama pass. The French troops at Talavera were also in full march to act upon the English army. It was only by twelve hours that Moore saved the passage of the Esla, and evaded the prompt manœuvre whereby Napoleon, in person, had hoped to intercept him. The retreat to this point was conducted in masterly order. General Hope moved by the road of Mayorga; general Baird by that of Valencia San Juan. Romana engaged to hold the bridge of Mansilla. The light brigades and the cavalry remained to the very last at Sahagun; and, to cover these movements, patroles of British horse were pushed boldly to the very lines of the enemy. The column of general Hope, and the reserve and light brigades, under the commander-in-chief, following in succession, crossed the bridge of Castro Gonzalo on the 26th. On the same day general Baird passed the Esla, at Valencia, by the ferry and the fords. Lord Paget, just as he had marched through Mayorga with the rear-guard, discovered the advanced horsemen of marshal Ney's corps. A body of them was drawn up on a rising ground flanking the road, and ready to act upon the line of his retreat. He directed two squadrons of the 10th upon them. At the head of his brave men, colonel Leigh spurred up the hill, and, despite the vantage ground and their great superiority of numbers, rode in upon the enemy, broke them, sabred many, and took a hundred prisoners. From Mayorga lord Paget marched to

Beneventè. On the 27th the bridge of Castro Gonzalo was destroyed. The communications with Astorga being now recovered, sir John Moore halted the army for two days at Beneventè, to clear out his magazines, after which he continued his retreat upon Astorga. For the greater part of his stores he could procure no transport, and they were destroyed. Upon the 29th all the infantry had already quitted Beneventè; the cavalry alone remained in the town, having their pickets upon the fine plain in front. The fords of the Esla were watched by these parties. Early on this morning general Lefebvre Desnouettes crossed the river at a ford near the bridge, with six hundred horsemen of the imperial guards, and advanced upon the pickets. They retired, steadily skirmishing, till, being joined by a small party of the third German hussars, they repeatedly charged the enemy and checked his advance. Colonel Otway commanded these pickets till general Charles Stewart took charge of them. Handsomely disputing their advance, the general slowly gave ground before the French, till he drew them well forward into the plain. The 10th hussars were formed quickly by lord Paget under cover of some houses near the town; and when the favourable moment arrived, they rode out smartly, and joining the pickets, the whole charged with such vigour that the imperial guards fled at speed to the fords, and re-crossed the river. They lost from fifty to sixty cut down on the field; seventy prisoners, including their general; and had seventy more wounded, who escaped. The loss of the British was fifty. It is said that Napoleon, whose head-quarters were at Valderas, on the oppo-

site bank, witnessed this combat. Soon after this period the emperor quitted the army and returned to France.

From the moment that the retreat commenced, discontent and disorder possessed the soldiers; and here in Benevente their angry devastations began. The fine castle of Benevente, a stately monument of the age of chivalry, — of such spacious grandeur as to afford in its vast halls and magnificent galleries lodging for two entire regiments, and a train of artillery that stalled its horses below, —was rudely dismantled by its guests. Fires were lighted on its tesselated pavements, and blackened its jasper columns, while the pictures were torn down from the walls of its rich chambers, and heaped as fuel upon the flames: and as the soldiery served this palace, so did they many a goodly mansion, and many a peaceful cottage on their route to the coast. They were already murmuring and disobedient; they moved along the weary roads dejected and sullen; broke their ranks on the smallest pretences; and their looks and words were alike insubordinate. Upon entering Astorga they found Romana's troops, who had just been driven from Mansilla and Leon. A scene of confusion arose. Romana had promised not to cross the British line of march; but with all good will, and all honest intention, Romana had no power to keep his promises, whether they regarded the taking part in hostile operations, or the observing of separate and regular lines of movement. In common with sir John Moore, Romana himself had been left again and again without any information, or deceived by false intelligence; like him, too, he had suffered all those

inconveniences and obstructions which the local authorities were perpetually imposing. He had been often compelled to counteract by force the frauds and the evasions of the rapacious and the interested. The picture of his wretched army at this period is thus given by colonel Jones: —

" The soldiers under arms little exceeded in number the sick borne on cars or mules; and as they slowly passed along, emaciated and enfeebled by disease, the procession had much more the appearance of an ambulatory hospital in need of an escort, than of an army to defend the country."

From Astorga to Lugo the English line of march was a scene of great suffering and incredible disorder. If any one thing had been a source of pride to sir John Moore, beyond all other, it was the high, the unequalled discipline of the fine army which he had led forward into Spain. The men were steady, clean, and obedient; robust, hardy, and brave. Discipline had now vanished; their attachment to their general was gone; their respect shaken. The length of the marches, the severity of the weather, and the wretched state of the roads,— here mud, there snow, — the want of supplies, and, above all, the dispiriting effect of a retreat, made them careless, irregular, and insolent; they quitted their ranks in search of food and liquor; they plundered; they wantonly destroyed property; they broke open stores of wine; they drank and loitered, and lay stupid in the roads. At Bembibre some hundreds, who sallied out from the plundered wine vaults when the French cavalry appeared before it, were taken or sabred on the road, as they vainly sought to run,

staggering after the rear-guard. At Villa Franca the soldiers were again busy at the work of plunder, and the general caused one of the marauders to be shot as an example: moreover, he issued the severest orders to the army. At Calcabellos on the Guia there was an affair between the British reserve and the enemy's advanced guard, consisting of six or eight squadrons. Not until many of these brave horsemen had fallen under the fire of the English riflemen were they supported by any of the French infantry; but at last they were strengthened by a body of Voltigeurs. In this combat about two or three hundred on both sides were killed and wounded. Among the first slain was the French general Colbert, a fine man*, and a gallant soldier, whose daring valour had been so conspicuous as to attract the notice and admiration of his English foes. His name was of great note in his own army, and many a battle plain in Germany had seen him lead up into the hottest fire the decisive charge. In this petty affair he fell.

The face of the country from Villa Franca to Lugo is mountainous and rugged. The cavalry, therefore, preceded the infantry, by whom they, in turn, were now covered. From the commencement of the campaign, the resolute and undaunted bearing of the British cavalry had been an honour to the army. The rear-guard reached Herrerias on the 5th of January; and here sir John Moore abandoned the intention of embarking at Vigo, and, from the reports of his engineers, selected Corunna,

* He was a man of so fine a form, that Canova the sculptor considered him as a perfect model.

as offering a more favourable position to cover his embarkation.

The division of general Baird was at Nogales; those of generals Hope and Fraser near Lugo. Sir John having resolved to rally his army at Lugo, and to offer battle to the enemy, sent an order to the leading division to halt at that place. This order was carried to sir David Baird by an aide-de-camp. That general most imprudently forwarded it by a private dragoon: the man got drunk, and lost the dispatch. In consequence, general Fraser's division had a severe and toilsome march, and retraced their steps by a painful countermarch, an operation which lost to it 400 stragglers. The passage of the bridge at Constantino, a spot which offered such advantages to the pursuing enemy that a great loss had been anticipated, was most skilfully and happily effected by the reserve without any. General Paget with two regiments made good an excellent formation on the other side, and, though repeatedly assailed by the enemy, held his ground firmly till nightfall. On the 7th sir John Moore drew up his army in a position near Lugo, in order of battle. As by magic, the organisation of his disorderly battalions was again complete. Neither severity of rebuke, nor even the example of a summary execution, had hitherto availed to check the wide and fearful insubordination: but when it was known that the colours of their regiments were planted in bivouac on a line of battle, to the joy and the pride of their officers, the men came hurrying to the ranks; and as they examined their locks, fixed their flints, and loosened in the scab-

bards those bayonets which the pouring rain had rusted fast in the sheaths, they again looked to their officers with the regard of a ready obedience and a brave devotion.

As soon as marshal Soult arrived before the British position, he made a strong *reconnoissance* first on the English centre with four guns and a few squadrons, and afterwards upon the left with a heavy column of infantry and artillery. From the centre he was driven off by the cannonade of fifteen pieces, and on the left his column, after pushing in the British outposts, was charged by the light troops under the immediate direction of sir John Moore, and very rudely handled. The enemy lost 400 men. Throughout the whole of the 8th the two armies lay in presence of each other, in order of battle, but Soult declined the attack. The English general satisfied with having rallied his own troops, and brought his pursuers to a stand, decamped in the night, and continued his retreat, leaving the fires burning bright upon his position, to deceive the enemy.

In silent order the troops retired, commencing their march about ten o'clock; but in spite of all the precautions taken to mark the right tracks, which led from the different parts of the position to the high road, the marks were destroyed by rain and tempestuous wind. Two divisions were completely bewildered, and were still near Lugo in the morning. Fatigued, depressed, and foundered for want of shoes, they straggled onwards through the mud, chilled by a falling sleet; and in a few hours the firm battalions, which had stood in position the

day before, ready and eager for battle, were a mob of fugitives and marauders. The reserve, under general Edward Paget, was the only body which, throughout this long and disastrous retreat, maintained its discipline and efficiency — a fact signally honourable to that officer. In justice, however, to the other troops, it should be allowed, that in the reserve the minds of the men were engaged by duties which interested and animated them; for, as the rear-guard, they were constantly in the presence of the enemy.

Between Sahagun and Lugo the casualties of the army, including those who fell in action, amounted to 1500. The loss of men between Lugo and Betanzos was yet more considerable. Here sir John Moore halted, and assembled all his force. Discipline was again, in some degree, restored by great exertions, and the columns marched from hence to Corunna in very tolerable order.

As soon as the general reached Corunna, where the transports had not yet arrived, he made all the necessary dispositions for covering his embarkation. The land-front of this weak fortress was strengthened, and the sea-face was dismantled. In all the labour of these preparations, the Spaniards of the city worked freely, tendering the British all possible assistance with heart and hand, although they well knew the object and end of our operations; an act of itself sufficient to stamp the character of the Spaniard with nobility.

A magazine of 4000 barrels of powder, upon a hill, three miles from the city, was fired on the 13th. The explosion was terrific; the earth trem-

bled; the waters were agitated; and every body stood, for a short and awful pause, breathless and grave.

The horses of the cavalry which had survived the march were brought out and shot; for the ground near Corunna not being practicable for that arm, they could not have been used in action; and it was humanely resolved that they should not be left in their miserable plight to fresh sufferings.

The assembling of the French army in his front made it necessary for sir John Moore to select a position on which to meet them.

On the evening of the 14th, the transports from Vigo entered the harbour, and the embarkation of the sick, the artillery, and the dragoons commenced; eight British and four Spanish guns were retained on shore.

During the night of the 15th, and on the morning of the 16th, all the baggage and all encumbrances were put on board ship; and it was intended to withdraw the army after dark that evening. About two o'clock in the afternoon the French beat to arms, and prepared to attack the position of the English. Half a league from Corunna, the English army, 14,500 strong, was drawn up on a low range of hills; the only position which their numbers and their object allowed them to occupy. A loftier range of rocky heights encircled and commanded it within cannon shot, and on these the French had already taken post.

Marshal Soult had 20,000 men under arms. From the lighter guns along his front, and from a battery of heavier calibre on his left, he opened a smart

cannonade, and under cover of the fire moved down in three weighty columns to the attack. The first of these, throwing out its voltigeurs, and driving in the picquets, attacked the British right, assailing the front and flank of general Baird's division. The second column marched upon the British centre. The third, with less of earnest intention in the character of its attack, moved upon the British left, where the troops were commanded by sir John Hope.

The horse of the commander-in-chief stood saddled for him to visit the outposts just as the alarm was given. He rode thankful to the field. The thunder of the guns and the rolling of the musketry was already begun as he galloped to the summons with a grave joy.

The battle was most furious near the village of Elvina, on the British right. In this quarter of the field sir David Baird was severely wounded; and here, while earnestly watching the progress of the stern combat in Elvina, sir John Moore himself was struck upon the left breast by a cannon-shot: it threw him from his horse; but, though the laceration was dreadful, it did not deprive him of his mental energy; he sat upon the ground, and watched the battle. His eye was steadfast and intent, and it brightened as he saw that all went bravely and well. The soldiers now put him in a blanket to carry him to the rear; as they did so the hilt of his sword struck upon his wound, and caused him a sudden pang. Captain Hardinge would have taken off the sword, but the general stopped him, saying, "It is as well as it is: I had "rather it should go out of the field with me!"

With these words he was borne from the battle. It was a long way to the town, and the torture of the motion was great; but the expression of his countenance was calm and resolute, and he did not sigh. Several times he made his attendants stop, and turn him round, that he might gaze upon the field of battle.

After he was laid down upon a couch in his lodgings, the pain of his wound increased. He spoke with difficulty, and at intervals. He often asked how the battle went; and being at last told that the enemy were defeated, he said instantly, "It is a great satisfaction to me to know that we have beaten the French." He was firm and composed to the last; once only, when speaking of his mother, he betrayed great emotion. "You know," said he, to his old friend colonel Anderson, "that I always wished to die this way!" The bitter agony of spirit which he had long endured was thus mournfully evidenced. "I hope," he exclaimed, "the people of England will be satisfied! — I hope my country will do me justice!' These precious sentences were among the last he uttered; his sufferings were not long; he expired with the hand of colonel Anderson pressed firmly in his own.

We shall not further describe the action than by saying, that when darkness put an end to the work of battle, not only had the French been repulsed at all points, but the line of the English was considerably advanced beyond the original position. The loss of the French was, by their own admission, 3000; that of the British was about 800 killed and wounded.

The brigade of general Hill and that of general Beresford remained on shore the 17th, to cover the embarkation of the army, which began soon after the close of the engagement. By night the victorious troops filed down from the field of battle to their boats, and embarked. There was a moon, but it gave only a wan and feeble light; for the weather was misty and chill. Soon after nightfall, the remains of sir John Moore were quietly interred in the citadel of Corunna. Soldiers dug his grave; soldiers laid him in the earth. He was buried in his military cloak, and was left asleep, and alone, upon a bastion — a bed of honour well chosen for a hero's resting-place. This last duty done, the officers of his personal staff went on ship-board, " in soldiers' sadness, the silent mourning of men who know no tears."

Sir John Moore had signalised his name in the West Indies, in Holland, and in Egypt. His life was spent among the troops; among the troops he died; and, to this hour, it is a distinction to any officer to have learned his duty under the eye and the voice of Moore. We admire his character; we glory in his warrior-death; we consider his fame hallowed by his end; — but we think that, with the deep knowledge of human nature he possessed, the state of Spanish society, under the actual circumstances of peril and bewilderment, ought not to have surprised him, far less to have irritated him to the extent to which it certainly did. That time was lost at Salamanca, is a matter of fact and a subject of regret. The value of a day, or of an hour, in war, is great. It is vain to ask what might

have been the consequences of a movement into the heart of Spain, which was never made, and which, according to able and acute men, never should have been contemplated; but it is certain that between that measure and a retreat on Portugal sir John Moore wavered long in his decisions. War, we are told, and truly, by all good officers, is a science; and we are shown how accurate and profound are, and ought to be, the calculations of a commander; yet, "nothing venture, nothing have," has passed into a proverb with mankind.

In all undertakings, we must leave something in a state too incomplete to command the certainty of success. We must exercise our trust in Providence, whatever be our aim and end; for "the lot is cast into the lap, the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord;" and, undoubtedly, with a righteous cause, we may look hopefully for help. We are not of the number of those who dare to speak lightly of the spirit of Moore; for we know the help of Heaven was that to which he looked; and we believe that it was an act of conscientious self-denial, which made him hesitate to risk the lives of so many thousands on the desperate hazards of a chivalric effort.

CHAP. XI.

CORUNNA AND FERROL SURRENDER TO THE FRENCH. — NOTICE OF ROMANA. — SOULT MARCHES TO INVADE PORTUGAL. — HIS OPERATIONS ON THE FRONTIER. — COMBATS WITH THE SPANIARDS. — COMBATS WITH THE PORTUGUESE. — CAPTURE OF OPORTO. — RETROSPECT OF TRANSACTIONS IN PORTUGAL. — DEFEAT OF THE SPANIARDS IN LA MANCHA. — SECOND SIEGE AND FALL OF ZARAGOZA.

THE inhabitants of Corunna maintained their weak walls with honour and good faith until the fleet of England was fairly at sea.

On the 19th of January they formally surrendered the place, and the French took possession. With the means found here, Marshal Soult immediately proceeded to the attack of Ferrol, a regular fortress, well armed, and provided with a sufficient garrison. It was disgracefully yielded up to him on the 26th of January. The helpless and indignant citizens were betrayed by their chiefs; but there were serious commotions in the city before the surrender was effected. Aided by the artillery, the ammunition, and the stores of Ferrol, the French soon overran Gallicia.

We return for a moment to that period of the English retreat when the miserable band of Romana crossed the line of its march at Astorga. In the woeful plight already described, it was led by its noble commander towards the valleys of the Syl and

the Minho. The rear division of these sick and disorganised fugitives was cut up by the cavalry of general Franceschi, who had been directed to pursue and disperse them. Romana placed Mendizabal with a small body in the Val des Orres, furnishing a post, at the strong point of Puente de Bibey, to cover the approaches to Orense. He himself collected from two to three thousand men at Toabado, about twenty miles from St. Jago, on the 15th of January. The position of Mendizabal was attacked and carried by a division of French infantry under general Marchand (detached for that object from the corps of Ney) upon the 17th. The overthrow and dispersion of the troops with Mendizabal completed the distresses of Romana. Many of his men now threw away their arms, and returned to their homes. The general himself, with his few and faithful cavalry, and such of the infantry as had not disbanded, retired to Oimbra, a village on the frontier of Portugal near Monterey. At this place was a small magazine, originally collected for the use of sir John Moore's army. Here, therefore, with a spirit depressed but not subdued by disaster, Romana used every exertion to reassemble and reorganise a division. Here it was that Blake, his colleague, in a fit of surly wilfulness, deserted him, taking away those officers who were his own more immediate followers. Amid all these vexations, Romana, with a buoyant and a noble spirit, still manifested zeal and hope, and continued his preparations for the field.

Upon the capture of Ferrol, Soult fixed his headquarters at St. Jago de Compostella, repaired his

equipments, refreshed his army, and, after a halt of only six days, put himself again in motion on the 1st of February, to march, in obedience to the orders of Napoleon, upon Oporto. With nineteen thousand infantry, four thousand horse, and fifty-eight pieces of artillery, this active and able commander moved rapidly to the Minho. This river, from Melgaço to its mouth, is the line of the frontier of Portugal in that quarter. It is guarded by a few old walled towns, in a dilapidated state, to which fortresses on the Spanish side, of like strength and in like condition, correspond. These could not have arrested the march of Soult for a day; but the river itself was a serious obstacle. It was broad and swollen, and rushed along rapid in its wintry strength. All the boats had been removed, and the peasantry and militia of Portugal were in arms upon the southern bank. The energy and the ingenuity of the French were here exhibited in a very remarkable manner. They transported some large boats from the harbour and fort of Guardia to Campo Saucos, overland. This operation they effected with infinite toil and labour; dragging these boats, and also some heavy guns, by the help of rollers, over two miles of difficult and hilly ground. A whole division of the army was thus employed for four days.

Soult attempted the passage of the Minho on the 15th. In the night, 300 soldiers were embarked; and the boats, manned by French marines, dropped down the Tamuga into the Minho; but they did not succeed in crossing before the dawn of day. The moment the foremost party had effected a landing, the militia and peasantry fell upon them with vigour,

and they were immediately destroyed. Those who remained in the boats in the rear, seeing the attempt now hopeless, pulled back; and the French army, from the heights on the Spanish side, where they stood in array, eager to cross, and from which their own cannon were thundering on the southern bank, saw their chosen comrades defeated and slain, and the bold project of their general baffled. Soult now changed his line of operations, and on the 16th marched up to the river towards Ribidavia. His cavalry, keeping the bank of the Minho, was galled by musketry from the opposite side: they twice, however, broke the bands of Spanish peasantry whom they encountered in their front as they advanced, and they burned two villages on their route.

A body of 800 Gallicians attempted to check the French army, by disputing the passage of the Morenta and the Noguera, two inconsiderable rivers, but at that season impassable. The bridges being barricadoed, the cavalry of the French advanced guard was easily repulsed; but on the following morning a brigade of infantry, of Heudelet's division, forced the passage, and, driving these Gallicians before them to Ribidavia, found a body of 10,000 peasants posted on a strong hill which covered the town. As soon as marshal Soult had got up a division of infantry and a brigade of cavalry, he drove away these Spaniards. The efficiency and the organisation of this force of the patriots may be judged from the fact, that the bodies of twenty priests were counted among the dead. There had been a brave resistance, for the slain were numerous. On the one side, priests and peasants: on the other, a marshal

of France and the conquerors of Austerlitz. All these affairs occurred within a short month after the embarkation of the British at Corunna.

The French entered Orense on the 19th, and seized the bridge over the Minho. Soult made Tuy a place of arms; left in it his artillery and all heavy encumbrances; appointed a garrison for its defence; and, taking sixteen light guns and six howitzers, abandoned for the time all communication with Gallicia, and marched against Oporto. The province of Entre Minho e Douro was occupied by a force composed principally of *ordenanzas** and militia, with a few regulars, all of a fierce spirit, but without order, discipline, or confidence in their chiefs. General Freire commanded this lawless body; and had his head-quarters at Braga. In the province of Tras os Montes general Silveira had charge of a smaller force, composed of the same unmanageable materials, and in the same insubordinate state. Romana, having again about 9000 men collected round him, occupied Oimbra and Monterey. The head-quarters of Silveira were at Chaves. These two generals were in communication with each other, and, agreeing to act in concert, they formed a first line. Their combined forces amounted to about 16,000 men, and their line extended from Monterey to near Chaves, a distance of fifteen miles.

The second line was held by general Freire, who was at Braga with fourteen guns, and 25,000 men. Of these only 6000 were armed with muskets: pikes, spears, goads, and a few old fowling-pieces,

* Peasantry enrolled and called out by regulation.

were the weapons of the remainder. Baron Eben, a German in the English service, commanding the second battalion of the Lusitanian legion, was associated with Freire in this charge. The third line was an intrenched position, covering Oporto, and occupied by the mob of that city, by a rude levy of the bishop's, and a very few regular troops—if, at that time, any troops in Portugal could be so designated.

Soult attacked Romana at Monterey, on the 6th of March, with three divisions of infantry and one of dragoons. The Spaniards abandoned their positions on his approach, spiked the guns of Monterey, and, after a short skirmish, retired on Puebla de Sanabria. They were so closely pressed by Franceschi, that a body of about 3000, finding itself assailed in the rear by the French infantry, and headed by their horsemen, halted on some rough ground, and formed a large weak square. Against each face of this square Franceschi directed a regiment of cavalry: their charge was simultaneous; the dismayed Spaniards were immediately broken, trampled down, and sabred without mercy. They left upon the fatal spot 1200 dead.

Romana, with his main body, was at some distance when this bloody affair took place. He hastily retired, with 6000 men, by Braganza and Puebla de Sanabria, and regained the valley of the Syl. Meanwhile Silveira was beaten at Villaza, lost his guns, and retreated to a strong position behind Chaves. Three thousand of his men, disregarding the plans and orders of their chief, threw themselves into this place. On the 13th, after keeping up a noisy and harmless fire for two days, they surrendered it to

the French. Marshal Soult made it a place of arms; established his hospital in that town; and then proceeded to Braga, in front of which place his people were all collected on the 18th, after a troublesome and disputed march through the long and difficult defiles of Venda Nova, Ruivaens, and Salamondé. On the 20th, after driving from their strong post the tumultuous and savage mob which had just murdered their poor general Freire, at the instigation of a faction hostile to that leader, he entered Braga. General Franceschi, pursuing the fugitives closely, came up with 3000 Portuguese at Falperra. They fought hard, but were beaten, and the greater part of them were slain on the spot. In the combats of this day the Portuguese lost all their artillery, and above 4000 men, of which number only 400 were made prisoners.

After some fierce fighting on the Ave, the French effected the passage of that river, and were concentrated before Oporto on the 27th.

In the intrenched camp in front of this city were 40,000 men. The hopes of the people were extravagant; they attributed the defeat of Silveira, and that of the force at Braga, to treachery. There were constant tumults in Oporto, and many worthy but wretched individuals became the victims of a blind suspicion and a jealous fury.

The mob considered their intrenchments impregnable: their lines were armed with 200 pieces of cannon, and they manned the works with all the alacrity of a vain and secure confidence.

Soult made a feint upon the left of these intrenchments on the evening of the 28th. In the night

the Portuguese were disturbed by a false alarm; they fancied that the French were advancing to the assault: they rushed to their guns, and opened a tremendous fire, which they kept up with little intermission till near day, when, instead of a field of slain and wounded, and the aspect of discomfiture, they beheld three dark and steady columns of attack. The French stormed these formidable lines, and carried the intrenchments, all the redoubts, and the guns, at the point of the bayonet. Two battalions broke through the barriers of the city, poured into the streets, and penetrated to the bridge, driving before them a terrified and helpless crowd of men, women, and children. These unhappy fugitives rushed wildly on the bridge. The nearest boats gave way to the pressure, and sunk with their wretched burden. The cries of these poor creatures were stifled by the waters; and the spectacle was so fearful, that the Frenchmen in pursuit paused in the work of death, and exerted themselves to save as many as they could. In other parts of the city the carnage was terrible. Two hundred Portuguese took post in the palace of the bishop, and made an effort to defend it. They were all put to the sword. Long after resistance ceased, the shrieks of women, and the cries with which the murdered die, might be heard in every street. It is computed that in the battle and in the city no fewer than 10,000 of the Portuguese were slain. The exertions of Soult and of his officers, and of the more generous and compassionate of his men, to stop the slaughter were great; but the soldiery, harassed by their late toils, and exasperated by the cruel fate of

such of their comrades as had fallen into the hands of the peasants, gave no quarter, made no distinctions, but glutted their appetite for vengeance. The whole of this campaign only cost the French 1000 men; of these, 500 fell at the assault of Oporto. But while the French marshal had accomplished the object of his march, by the capture of this city and by the dispersion of all the Portuguese forces that had ventured to oppose a front to his advance, Silveira with fresh reinforcements had gathered about the walls of Chaves, and the small garrison which Soult had left there, together with 1200 sick, had surrendered to that active and patriotic leader.

We must here take a review of the transactions in Portugal from the moment of sir John Moore's advance into Spain. We shall notice with brevity those struggles and reverses of the Spaniards in various places which were simultaneous with the retreat of sir John Moore, and with the periods immediately subsequent to that event; after which we shall hasten to the subject of the present memoir, who, within seven days of his landing at Lisbon, was on horseback for the Douro.

After the convention of Cintra, the regency of Portugal was established. The frontier fortresses were garrisoned by the English, and two British regiments were sent to Oporto. This last place was in a very unsettled state. Owing to the bishop's faction, the public mind throughout the whole land was more or less disturbed; nor was there wanting a French faction at Lisbon to stir the trouble. Nevertheless, the people in general, regarding Eng-

land as the old and faithful ally of their country, felt no jealousy of British influence; acknowledged the regency; and openly expressed their desire for the guidance of British leaders and the assistance of British troops.

While the ill-timed court of enquiry detained sir Arthur Wellesley at home, and while sir John Moore was on the plains of Leon, sir John Cradock was charged with the command in Portugal, and proceeded to that country. On reaching Oporto, he found the faction of the bishop busy with intrigue, and the people of that city ready for any work of violence or blood to which the promoters of discord might desire to excite them.

Sir John Cradock had touched at Corunna in passing; and, having found the Lavinia frigate there with treasure to the amount of 1,500,000 dollars, had brought away 800,000, proposing to leave some at Oporto, and to take the remainder to Lisbon, that Moore, whose intention to retreat upon Portugal was then known, might not want money for his troops.

A body of thirteen hundred men had been organised at Oporto by sir Robert Wilson, under the title of the Lusitanian Legion. Of this force the regency was jealous, because the formation of it was originally a project of the bishop's faction. Sir John Cradock left 300,000 dollars at Oporto; directed the two British regiments in that province to march to Almeida; and, advising sir Robert Wilson to move into Tras os Montes with his legion, in accordance with the desire of the regency to assemble a force in that province, he

departed for Lisbon. Sir Robert Wilson, however, preferred another course, and marched to Almeida.

The regular army of Portugal at this period amounted to a force of twenty thousand nominally, but only ten thousand of them had arms. They had no discipline, and no officers; and the militia and *ordenanza* were but a violent and unruly rabble. The English troops scattered over the kingdom did not amount to ten thousand men, including the sick. Of thirteen battalions four were in the north, two at Abrantes, one in Elvas, and six at Lisbon. Of the four battalions in the north, sir John Cradock appointed three to reinforce sir John Moore; and two battalions from the south were directed to advance by Castello Branco and Ciudad Rodrigo with the same object. He was now to provide for the frontier of Portugal on the line of the Tagus; and this, at a time when the fourth French corps had just passed that river at Almaraz, and menaced Badajos. To effect this object, he had only seven battalions of infantry and three hundred horse. At this moment Mr. Frere, the central junta, the junta of Badajos, and the regency of Portugal, were pressing sir John Cradock to march into the south of Spain. As soon, however, as the communication with sir John Moore was cut off, as it was towards the end of December, Cradock halted the British, proceeding under General Richard Stewart to reinforce Moore at Castello Branco. He also sent instructions to general Cameron at Almeida to collect the convalescents of Moore's army; to unite them with the two British battalions there; and, if possible,

to make his way to the army in Spain; but, if he judged the hazard too great, to return to Lisbon: in either case, to send his stores and sick to Oporto.

Sir John Cradock, feeling no confidence either in the troops or the government of Portugal, directed general Stewart to destroy the bridges of Villa Velha and Abrantes, and to retire upon Sacavem, a position near Lisbon, in which he had resolved to concentrate his troops, and which he proposed to defend as long as possible. At this period, when a column of infantry and two thousand horse,—the advanced guard of the fourth corps of the French army,—and when, in fact, thirty thousand Frenchmen were in full march for Lisbon, the advance of sir John Moore caused Napoleon to arrest the movement of the fourth corps, and Portugal was relieved from all present fear of invasion. In the north, general Cameron made an effort to join sir John Moore by the Tras os Montes; but, hearing of the retreat to Corunna, he halted on the 9th of January, and would have marched back to Almeida. The troops of the French general Lapisse were, however, already at Zamora. He now retired to Lamego, and wrote to sir Robert Wilson, whom he had left at Almeida, recommending him to retreat upon the same place; but Wilson, rejoicing, amid these scenes of confusion, in a command that was entirely independent, held his ground upon the frontier, and exhibited such enterprise and activity in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, that he aroused the sinking spirits of all around, and, gathering about him Spanish reinforcements, the peasantry of Portugal and the straggling convalescents of the

army of Moore, he rendered a service at the moment invaluable.

The regency of Portugal having promised sir John Cradock to assemble native troops at Thomar, Abrantes, and Villa Velha, he halted the brigade of Stewart at Santarem; a British regiment still remained at Elvas.

We turn now towards Spain. The central junta which had retired hastily to Seville, when the line of the Tagus was menaced, being urged by Mr. Frere to order some movement of the Spanish troops, whereby a diversion might be caused of the French forces pressing upon the army of Moore, directed the duke del Infantado, who commanded a levy of nearly 20,000 men at Cuenca, to advance against the enemy. A levy of 5000 men, under the marquis del Palacio at Carolina, was to move forwards at the same moment. Infantado advancing by Ocana and Aranjuez, and uniting this division with his own force, was to push for Madrid. The condition of his army was deplorable. A large proportion was without arms, a still larger without clothing: they were without pay, and they had no discipline. The military art was, of a truth, either unknown or forgotten: what little system they had either of organisation, interior economy, or field discipline, was out of date; and, in as far as it had engaged their prejudices, stood greatly in the way of their improvement. In martial qualities the Spanish soldiers were not deficient: they were hardy, patient under privation, enduring of fatigue, abstemious, and sober; and they marched with readiness into battle, and that, too, after much and sad experience of defeat.

The duke del Infantado, projecting a movement on Toledo, quitted Cuenca on the 10th of January, and reached Horcajada on the 12th, with 10,000 men; Venegas, with the remainder of his army, was at Tarancon. This last officer with general Senra had been detached from Cuenca some time previously, to surprise the French cavalry at Aranjuez and Tarancon: in this object they had totally failed; Senra had halted at Horcajada without fulfilling his part in the operation; and Venegas, instead of surprising the enemy, was himself surprised: however, the enemy had retired immediately afterwards, and left him in Tarancon. On the 13th, Infantado marched onwards to Carascoza, and was met by the fugitives from the division of Venegas, who told of him of their disaster at Ucles. On that morning, Victor, with a division of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, had found Venegas unexpectedly at Ucles, had fallen upon him, and driven him in confusion towards Alcazar; here Ruffin's division had already arrived by mistake and not design. The Spaniards were thus intercepted in their retreat, and routed. Some laid down their arms, some dispersed; only one small body, under general Giron, made good its passage by the road of Carascoza, and rejoined the duke del Infantado. Many of the Spaniards fled wildly across the fields; and, of two bodies which attempted to preserve a formation, one coming upon the French park of artillery was received with grape, and the other fell in with Victor, by whom they had been already beaten earlier in the day. Their discomfiture and destruction were completed. The prisoners taken in this confused business were marched to Madrid; and such as

fell out from fatigue and exhaustion were shot by the way-side. The old town of Ucles was plundered with the aggravation of many circumstances of galling insult; and those violent and barbarous things were done, of which the baser part of mankind, when excited to havoc, are always guilty; no doubt to the horror and shame not only of the officers but of the greater part of the French soldiers themselves.

From La Mancha we pass to Arragon; there, after the defeat of Tudela, the first object of the French was the reduction of Zaragoza. Their preparations were proportioned to the importance of of that object; and those of the Zaragozans to defend their city were the utmost that the resolute energy of a people taught by experience, and now assisted by scientific officers, could possibly effect: they were ready to sacrifice property, to pull down their dwellings, to make the convents, forts, and the churches, barracks. The streets were barricadoed and retrenched: every strong building was fortified; the doors and windows of private houses were built up, and the whole front of them pierced with loop-holes. The people gave themselves and all they possessed to the war. The population was one vast garrison, and the "city was all fortress." Even the women were regularly enrolled in companies to serve the sick, and to aid the combatants in those many ways in which the help of woman is not only the sweetest succour but the most powerful encouragement. The bread which they brought had a strengthening nourishment for the heart; and the cartridges which they distributed carried a charm to make steady the aim of the husband

and the father. The countess Burita, a lady most feminine in person, and most heroic in heart, commanded these devoted females.

The inhabitants themselves, all combatants, were supported by a garrison of 30,000 troops. A body of excavators, formerly employed on the canal, were enrolled as sappers and miners: there was a strong force of cannoneers; and thirteen officers of engineers superintended the many and vast works which had been constructed as the regular external defences of the city.

With only 35,000 men the French advanced to the siege of Zaragoza, while certainly not fewer than 50,000 men, willing to fight and die in its defence, lay ready within its walls; but it must be remembered, again, that these 35,000 were the conquerors of all those warlike troops in Germany and the north of Europe, of whose discipline and prowess the page of modern history is full.

The marshals Moncey and Mortier (and afterwards Lasnes) were entrusted with the reduction of this important place. The French sat down before it on the 20th of December, attacked the Monte Torrero the next morning, and penetrated by a sudden assault into the suburb. The Torrero was carried; but the attack of the suburb, not being simultaneous with that on the fort, it signally failed.

On the 24th of December, Zaragoza was completely invested on both sides of the river. General Lacoste, a chief of the corps de Genie, and aide-de-camp of the emperor, directed the siege. In the progress of it this distinguished officer was slain. The description of it we shall not attempt, because we

cannot afford space to detail the heroic story. It has many times been told; nor does the relation of it belong further to this memoir, than as it is important to mark throughout the whole work what and how great were the efforts of the Spaniards themselves in working out that deliverance for their country which, but for the genius of Wellington and the prowess of British soldiers, had, perhaps, never been effected at all, or only, after very long and sad sufferings, by a course of sullen and universal but ill-combined resistance. The trenches against Zaragoza were opened on the night of the 29th of December, but the French did not obtain possession of its sacred ruins till the 21st of February. Long after the walls of Zaragoza fell, the city itself resisted. The stern contest was continued from street to street, and from house to house. In vault and cellar, on balcony and in chamber, the deadly warfare was waged without any intermission. By the slow and sure process of the mine the assailants worked their terrific path, and daily explosions told loudly of their onward way. Meantime the bombardment was fierce and constant, and the fighting incessant. Every house was a post: the crash of falling buildings was continual. Three thousand pounds of powder were placed beneath the University, and with a dire explosion the once peaceful building fell. While the struggle was yet fierce and alive, came pestilence into those vaults and cellars where the aged, and the women and the children, lay sheltered from the storm of shells. They sickened in vast numbers, and died there where they

lay. The survivors left them in their tomb; or, if charitable hands carried the corpses out to the door of some ruined church, there they lay unburied, in large and fearful companies, and rotted and dissolved. The bones of more than 40,000 persons, of every age and sex, lay all about, above and below the earth, horrible to the hasty tread. Some 12,000 sickly and feeble men survived to lay down those arms which they could scarce support.

The defenders of Zaragoza were of three distinct classes. The enrolled troops; the peasants of the neighbourhood, who had flocked within the walls; and the citizens. Among the two last parties there was generated a system of terror that punished all cowardice; and, regarding even lukewarmness as treason, punished it, also, with summary execution on a gibbet; a circumstance that a little shadows over the brightness of the resistance. To the plebeian leaders, the principal of whom were slain during the siege, the city is chiefly indebted for the glory of her long and wonderful defence.

Palafox, a name that was once and long a kind of hallowed spell, was not the man we fondly thought and would fain have found him. To say that he was not sincere as a patriot, and that he did not exhibit spirit as a man, would be greatly to wrong his memory. The warm part which he took, when at first he aroused Arragon to resistance; the language of those proclamations, which were read and listened to with a burning eagerness all over Spain, and all of which Palafox himself penned; and the presence of this

chief in many scenes of blood and peril; prove that he was sincere as a patriot and brave as a man: but

> "Worth and fame to be secure,
> Must be in death enshrined."

The foundation of the heroic character was wanting; there was no moral depth, no living principle of action. He grew weary of the fearful and never-ending contest. He detested the fierce men of the people, and their system of terror. He fell sick; and in a city where half the very combatants, daily fighting in the streets, were sick also, for the last month of the siege he never came forth from a secure and vaulted building. In this recess, while the death-shower of shot and shell was pouring its destruction upon the exposed, and while pale pestilence was walking about the mute and melancholy chambers of thousands of his fellow-citizens, the habits of a former life returned upon him,—and Palafox is reported to have passed the period of his seclusion in sensual indulgence. Let the reader sigh with us over this humiliating fact, and let him lay to his heart the mournful lesson which it offers. Such and so weak a thing is man!

Honours were decreed to Zarogoza by the patriotic government of Spain; and the decree contained an especial promise, that whenever Palafox should be restored to liberty, the nation would confer upon him that reward which might seem most worthy of his unconquerable constancy and ardent patriotism. Palafox, however, died in captivity. His name will ever be identified with the heroic defence of

Zaragoza: it was long a watchword in all the camps of Spain; and enough of glory will yet remain upon it to make men turn gladly away from the contemplation of those disappointing features, and those moral failings, which now lie "nailed in his chest."

CHAP. XII.

NOTICE OF THE WAR IN CATALONIA. — TRANSACTIONS IN PORTUGAL AND THE SOUTH OF SPAIN. — THE PORTUGUESE ARMY PLACED UNDER A BRITISH COMMANDER. — THE SPANIARDS DEFEATED AT MEDELLIN AND AT CIUDAD REAL.

CATALONIA, from the very commencement of the war, resisted the invader with vigour, constancy, and success. Many of her towns had been pillaged, many of her villages burned, but where their feet rested there alone, and oftentimes not even there, the troops of France found themselves, and but for the moment, masters. Mongat was taken by Duhesme, and Gerona was twice besieged. Mongat was soon retaken by the co-operation of the British. The assault on the castle of Mongat was concerted with lord Cochrane, and the crew of the Imperieuse were engaged in that action. The siege of Gerona was twice raised. The second time this was effected in a very brilliant manner by the count de Caldagues with about 6000 men, whom the arrival of the marques del Palacio from the Balearic Isles, with a reinforcement of 5000 regular troops, left disposable for that important service.

At the end of August, 1808, the French having been on all sides defeated, and on some occasions not without disgrace, only held Barcelona, Figueras, and Mont Jouy. From the rugged summits of their

native mountains, the courageous and hardy Catalans bade defiance to the legions of Napoleon. By the marques Palacio new levies were organised with great activity, and the regular army was strengthened by reinforcements from Majorca, Minorca, and by 4000 troops recently arrived from Portugal. The chief object of Palacio was the recovery of Barcelona; and with this view he collected magazines at various points on the Llobregat, and took up an entrenched position at San Boy. The French came out of Barcelona, and drove him away, after a severe engagement; in which they carried the position of San Boy, and captured three guns, together with several magazines of provisions, clothing, and other military stores. The Catalans, however, were not disheartened by this check, and Palacio, taking up a new position on the mountains, effectually guarded all the roads which debouche from the plain of Barcelona, and established a strong blockade. At this critical juncture general Gouvion St. Cyr entered Catalonia at the head of 18,000 men. His first object was the town and fort of Rosas, the possession of which was important, and under their circumstances indispensably necessary, to the secure holding of Barcelona. The siege of this place was a service allotted to general Reille, and his corps was strengthened by the Italian division of Pino. The works of Rosas were bad; but the spirit of the garrison was excellent; and a small British squadron, lying then in the bay, some marines, and fifty seamen, were thrown into the citadel and Fort Trinidad to assist in the defence. Reille, contrary to his expectation, found himself compelled to lay regular siege to a

place which he had designed to carry by a sudden assault. On the 16th an attack was made on Fort Trinidad; it failed. The town was attacked on the night of the 27th. It was defended by 500 men; they fought stoutly, but were at last overpowered; only fifty of them escaped, and these entered the citadel. A battery was opened on the citadel; and and Fort Trinidad had already been breached, when lord Cochrane arrived in the Imperieuse, and with eighty seamen and marines threw himself into the fort. On the 13th, the French stormed the breach of Fort Trinidad, and were repulsed; but on the 5th of December, the citadel having a wide breach, and being no longer tenable, consented to surrender; and 2000 men laid down their arms, and were made prisoners of war. Lord Cochrane seeing all further resistance to be vain, blew up the magazine of Fort Trinidad, withdrew his people, and put to sea.

While the French were before Rosas, general Vives, by whom Palacio had been superseded, was foolishly occupied in making preparations for the siege of Barcelona. The very day after the capitulation of Rosas, St. Cyr was in full march for the relief of that city. He was at the head of 15,000 foot, and 1500 horse. The army of Catalonia under Vives amounted to 30,000 men. The French general, after a bold and difficult march, conducted with consummate skill and resolution, was met near Llinas by Vives, who with 10,000 men had come out to oppose him, and took up a strong position in his front.

St. Cyr, who had been forced to send back his artillery to Figueras, resolved instantly to attack

the Spaniard, although twelve guns were distributed along his line. He did so; directing his attacks to be made in columns without any deployments. The only brigade which disobeyed this order was beaten back by the division of Reding; but a fresh disposition being made, and a reserve column brought up, the battle was restored. In a few minutes the Spanish line was broken; and all its guns, together with 2000 prisoners, were in the power of St. Cyr: only one column of the Spanish army quitted the field in good order; this Reding led across the Llobregat to Molino del Rey. Vives escaped over the mountains on foot; and embarking at Mataro, hastened to Tarragona. During the absence of Vives, Duhesme sallied from Barcelona against the besieging force under Caldagues. He was bravely met and repulsed; but Caldagues, when he heard of the defeat at Llinas, abandoned the magazines and withdrew behind the Llobregat. On the 17th St. Cyr entered Barcelona. On the morning of the 21st he succeeded in bringing the Spanish army behind the Llobregat to action, and gave it a complete discomfiture, taking all their artillery and about 1200 prisoners: the rest fled across a country most favourable for fugitives, and about 15,000 were afterwards collected at Tarragona. St. Cyr pushed his cavalry to the very walls. In this place Vives was deprived of a command, with which, from his total incapacity, he should never have been entrusted. He was, moreover, thrown into prison, and saved with difficulty from the bloody vengeance of the people. Reding was by the public voice immediately appointed to succeed him; a measure which

soon restored confidence throughout the whole province.

The system for a time pursued by Reding was admirable. He employed all the irregular force of the province in a desultory warfare with the French posts and detachments, and confined his personal attention to improving the discipline of his organised battalions. The character of Reding stood high in Catalonia: he was beloved by the soldiery, and respected by the authorities. The Catalans, however, soon exhibited the same vain character which had, in other provinces, caused the Spaniards to over-rate their own strength, and, feeling impatient of the presence of their invaders, they clamoured to be led to battle. The brave and faithful Reding was assailed by anonymous writings, accusing him of cowardice, incapacity, and treason: he had not fortitude enough to resist the popular cry. The army under Reding, which contained a few Swiss battalions, and many regular Spanish regiments, was already considerable; and by a new levy, which demanded the services of every fifth man in the province, it was augmented to a body of 28,000 men. Abandoning the prudent course he had hitherto pursued, he now projected offensive operations against St. Cyr. The Spanish troops occupied posts upon a line of sixty miles, which traversed a rugged country, and formed a half circle round the French army. The Catalans were put in motion upon the 14th of February; but on the 16th St. Cyr marched upon them; pierced their centre; separated their wings; threw back the right of Castro's force upon Capellades; and on the following day drove it in

confusion through Igualada, thus defeating a part of the left wing, and possessing himself of all their principal magazines, which had been collected at that place. St. Cyr now posted generals Chabot and Chabran at Igualada, to keep the beaten troops of Castro in check, and marched upon the 18th against Reding, whose extreme left was at St. Magi. He forced the position of St. Magi the same afternoon, and the following day marched to the abbey of Santa Creus. No sooner did Reding hear of the disaster of his left wing under Castro, than taking a Swiss battalion, 300 horse, and six pieces of light artillery, he set out, and hastened by the Pass of Cabra to join and rally the scattered force, and to conduct it to Tarragona; thus their roads lying on different sides of Santa Creus, Reding and St. Cyr passed each other, each unconscious of the other's vicinity, pursuing his own movement. Reding was joined by the troops which were retreating from the Col de Christina, and by a body of 1200 men who had bravely defended themselves at the abbey of Santa Creus. He proceeded to St. Colonna de Queralt, effected a junction with Castro, and was immediately at the head of a respectable body of 10,000 men. Here he received intelligence that Vals was occupied by the enemy, and the line of his retreat menaced. He held a council of war, and determined to retire by the Col de Riba, upon Tarragona. In passing near Vals the army of Reding was attacked by the division of Souham. That general allowed the advanced guard of the Spaniards, and the half of their main body, to pass

quietly before he made his assault; but he was baffled by the ability and the courage of Reding, and beaten off with considerable loss. The French, however, followed them on the line of their retreat to Tarragona; and, being strongly re-inforced, they overtook the Spaniards, and compelled them to engage. The Spanish position was carried; but the troops retired with steadiness for some distance. At length, being seized with a sudden fear, they broke and fled in confusion, leaving artillery and baggage to the victors. They all made for Tarragona; and the greater part, under cover of the darkness, gained that city in safety. The noble hearted Reding received several wounds in this action. He arrived at Tarragona on the night of the battle, and from thence he wrote his dispatches. He never mentioned his own wounds, but of those wounds he died. Reding was not an able general, but he was courageous and faithful, and a man of distinguished humanity; but he had lost a battle; and while he lay disabled by his wounds in Tarragona, it is recorded that the populace, who always attributed a defeat to the treachery of the general, would in their fury have extinguished with rude hands the flame of that bright life which was even then expiring. At the death of Reding, general Blake was appointed to the command of his army, and nominated captain-general of the "Coronilla;" an expressive title, whereby the three beautiful provinces of Valencia, Arragon, and Catalonia, when united, are often designated.

At this time Junot, who commanded the French

in Arragon, falling sick, returned to France, and was succeeded by Suchet. Before the retirement of Junot, Blake obtained an important success over his troops. A French detachment of 1000 men was cut off between Monzon and the river Cinca, and surrendered to the Spaniards under Pereña and Baget. Soon after this Blake advanced; and driving back the French posts upon his line of march, possessed himself of Alcanitz.

Suchet, however, had now taken command of the French. He found them discontented and disorderly; long harassing, perpetual exposure, the consciousness of the curse upon their cause, and the hourly experience that they were objects of hatred to an afflicted and vindictive people, had destroyed their spirit.

Suchet collected 8000 infantry and 700 horse, and marched them against Blake, whom he found in position at Alcanitz with about 12,000 men. Suchet's dispositions for attack were most able; but his troops were beaten by the Spaniards, and fairly fled down into the plain. Here the marshal rallied them, and at night-fall he led them off quietly: but the qualm of fear visited French hearts upon this occasion; for, though not pursued, the rear column was seized with a panic, and became a mob of frightened fugitives.

This action reflected rare honour upon Blake and the troops which he commanded; and it was a subject of universal rejoicing throughout Spain. The army of Blake was daily strengthened by fresh recruits and volunteers; and turning his whole attention towards Arragon, he resolved, if possible, to retake Zaragoza.

We return to the transactions in Portugal and

the south. In December, 1808, the English ministers directed Mr. Frere to negotiate with the supreme junta for the admission of a British garrison into Cadiz; and 4000 men were embarked at Portsmouth, under sir John Sherbrooke, for that object. At the same time they sent Sir George Smith to Cadiz, with a direct application to the governor, to the same purpose; giving sir George no instructions to communicate with Mr. Frere. Sir George found Cadiz helpless; and having satisfied himself that the inhabitants would receive an English garrison, he wrote to sir John Cradock for troops. Sir John sent the 40th regiment, by the route of Seville, from Elvas, and despatched 3000 men by sea, under general Mackenzie. That officer reached Cadiz on the 5th of February. His arrival, with an object different from that express one for which Mr. Frere was negotiating, did either really alarm the supreme junta, or was used by them as a convenient pretext for jealousy and objection. After much correspondence and discussion, and many idle propositions for the employment of this force, which they would not suffer to garrison Cadiz, general Mackenzie was recalled to Lisbon by sir John Cradock, and returned thither on the 12th of March

A French army was again at Merida, threatening Lisbon by the line of the Tagus. Elvas and Almeida were no longer garrisoned by the British, and general Cameron had returned from the north of Portugal to Lisbon. Sir Robert Wilson, having sent his guns to Abrantes, lest they should encumber him, still maintained himself in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, and, in con-

junction with a Spanish detachment under Don Carlos d'España, he kept alive the war on that frontier, by marches and skirmishes, which engaged fully the attention of the French advanced posts. Sir John Cradock, however, fearing that he should soon be pressed upon by the overwhelming forces of the enemy, which he judged to be now disposable, and fancying that it was the intention of the government at home to abandon Portugal, began to make such preparations for embarking with safety, when the moment of necessity should arrive, as very greatly, and not unnaturally, exasperated the population of Lisbon. The English became, for a time, suspected and insulted. From the Minho to the Tagus there was but one burning desire, — that was, to resist the invasion of the French. Nor, while they were daily murdering such of their own countrymen as they suspected either of belonging to the French party or being lukewarm in that of the nation, is it a matter of any surprise that they should have outraged an ally, whom they regarded as forsaking them in the hour of their need. Accordingly, English officers were insulted in those very streets in which they had been so often followed with the shouts of admiration.

While matters were in this turbulent state in Portugal, the British cabinet, happily not subdued by the late disasters in the Peninsula, resolved to reinforce the army; and the Portuguese government was induced to offer the command of its native forces to an English general with full powers to organise and discipline all their regiments anew. With this offer the cabinet of England wisely closed, subsi-

dised and armed all their regular forces, and the military strength and power of Portugal became for a season their own, — a weapon of fine temper, that general Beresford was allowed to polish, and that sir Arthur Wellesley soon wielded with equal address and courage.

The Portuguese government had expressed a wish that sir Arthur Wellesley himself should be the commander of their forces. The English cabinet offered him that post, which he, of course, declined. Many officers of rank and talent sought the appointment: it was bestowed upon major-general Beresford, a man of great interest, and possessing some few qualifications that eminently fitted him for the stubborn labours of military reform.

General (from henceforth marshal) Beresford landed at Lisbon early in March; received his commission, and commenced that salutary reform in the Portuguese regiments by which he did most certainly organise for the field a steady, efficient, brave army. He had to encounter many prejudices and great difficulties, not so much with the men as with the officers and the government; but he was of a stern character, and not without a great deal of good judgment in all matters of discipline and command, so that he finally and fully triumphed over all obstacles. Moreover, from the very hour that sir Arthur Wellesley took the chief command in Portugal, he had the firm and wise support of a mind that deeply appreciated the importance of his labours.

English officers were introduced into the Portuguese regiments as instructors; and after a time

almost all the corps were really, although not avowedly, under British commanders; a measure of necessity to the well-being of the army, and heartily consented to by many native Portuguese colonels, who were glad to hold the nominal honour of command, while they suffered their English major to conduct all the details of regimental economy and field exercise, without venturing, or even desiring, to interfere. The privates became greatly attached to their English officers, because they found them considerate, patient, and firm; full of integrity, in all matters concerning the pecuniary interests of the soldier; full of care, in all that concerned his comfort; full of intelligence, in all that concerned his instruction; full of zeal for his honour; and always setting a brave example in the field. We speak rather in anticipation, for as yet marshal Beresford, who had fixed his head-quarters at Thomar, was only laying the foundation of that solid and imposing structure which he at last succeeded in raising.

The return of general Mackenzie's brigade from Cadiz, and the arrival of general Sherbrooke's division increased the army of Cradock to 14,000 men. The kingdom of Portugal was at this hour menaced by 50,000 French. Victor, with 25,000 men, having defeated Cuesta at Medellin, threatened the Alemtejo. Lapisse, with 9000 men, lay at Salamanca and Ledesma, his moveable columns continually hovering about Ciudad Rodrigo; and Soult was at the same moment upon the banks of the Minho. These three corps were designed and directed by the emperor to combine their movements with a view to occupy Oporto and Lisbon. Frightened by the

advance of Soult, the junta of Oporto sent to Lisbon, and were clamorous for aid. The regency wished sir John Cradock to move to the succour of Oporto; but that officer, feeling the greater importance which attached to the defence of the capital, refused to march, and determined to cover Lisbon and the Tagus. Thus Oporto, being left to its fate, both by sir John Cradock and sir Robert Wilson, fell, as has already been described.

While Soult was employed in most ably and boldly performing his part in the combined attack of Portugal, marshal Victor, with 25,000 men, lay ready in the valley of the Tagus, to operate upon the Spanish army of Cuesta, posted on the southern bank of that river. He commenced his movements on the 15th of March, on which day he sent a division of infantry and a brigade of cavalry across the Tagus at Talavera. On the 16th he crossed himself with the main body of his army at the bridge of Arzobispo; and he sent his artillery, with a battalion of grenadiers, an escort of horse, and a raft bridge, to Almaraz. At this point they were to pass the river, when the columns of the army, already on the other side, should have advanced and possessed themselves of the heights opposite. General Henestrosa was posted on the Spanish left, with 8000 men, to defend the bridge of Almaraz. The Spanish right was posted behind a mountain torrent called the Ibor. They had a strong camp at Meza d'Ibor on a mountain. It was attacked by the division of general Laval, and, after a very hot but short contest, the Spaniards fled to Campillo, having lost 800 killed and wounded, 1000

prisoners, and seven guns. That the Spaniards did, for a time, show a good countenance, is proved by the French loss: they had 570 killed and wounded. A smaller body of Spanish troops were beaten from Frenedoso by the division of Villatte, with the loss of 300 prisoners. On the 18th, Henestrosa retired hastily before Laval; the same night the raft bridge was thrown across the Tagus; and on the morrow the dragoons and artillery passed the river, and the entire force marched towards Merida. There was an affair of cavalry at Miajadas, in which the light cavalry of the French under Bordesoult were drawn into an ambush by the Spaniards; and, being set upon by very superior numbers of Spanish horse, extricated themselves with difficulty, and with the loss of 170 killed and wounded. Cuesta retired to Medellin. Victor halted in Truxillo, having his advance at Miajadas; but, on the 27th, he was again in motion, and marched upon the enemy. He heard, the same evening, that Cuesta had been joined by Albuquerque, and lay ready for battle on the table land of Don Benito beyond Medellin, and he resolved to attack them. He had 14,000 infantry, 2500 cavalry, and forty-two guns. The Spanish army mustered 25,000 foot, 4000 horse, and twenty pieces of artillery.

The French, proud of past successes, and in all the confidence of victory, filed over the long and narrow bridge on the Guadiana, by which the old city of Medellin is approached; and the light horse of Lasalle, and the dragoons of Latour-Maubourg, debouched upon the wide plain beyond; the light cavalry moved forwards upon the left, the dragoons

upon the right, and the piquets of Spanish horse retired slowly before them to the high ground above: the Spanish infantry was not seen. The divisions of German and French infantry were scarcely formed in the plain, before the Spanish line advanced over the swelling ground which had concealed it, and descended for the battle. Victor placed his army so as to describe the arc of a circle. His left was on the Guadiana, his right leaned upon a difficult ravine, planted with trees and vineyards; the German infantry was stationed in the centre; the divisions of Villatte and Ruffin were in reserve; the Spaniards, in a long weak line, came rapidly and resolutely down; the mass of the Spanish cavalry, under the duke del Parque, was on their left; and the duke of Albuquerque, with a few squadrons, flanked the Spanish right; the whole moving in a sort of crescent, that enveloped the French left. Lasalle was compelled to give way under the pressure, and continually refusing his own left, brought his opponents close up to the main body of the French infantry, near Medellin. Upon the French right, the Spanish foot boldly advanced: they were charged by two regiments of Latour-Maubourg's dragoons, but they repulsed them with loss; the German infantry with great difficulty sustained the furious onset of some Spanish battalions. But the success of the Spaniards was of no long continuance; the French, though shaken, were soon rallied, and though they had lost a battery of guns, they soon brought up more. Marshal Victor reinforced Latour-Maubourg with fresh guns, and two columns of infantry; and

thus strengthened, that general beat down the Spanish foot with quick discharges of grape, and, rushing upon their disordered ranks at the charge, overthrew them, recovered all his ground, and, still advancing, crowned that part of the heights from which the Spanish left had at first descended. In an eager disjointed manner, the Spanish right was still pushing forwards, and the French were compelled to fall back into their ranks, before fiercé and daring skirmishers. With loud and haughty shouts, these Spaniards threatened their enemies, saying, that the plain of Medellin should be the bloody bed of the French army. Even as they thus spoke, their own graves were making ready. Lasalle's cavalry took ground to its left, and held the important space between the French infantry and the river; Latour-Maubourg, already victorious on the right, poured down upon the Spanish rear; the French infantry advanced in front with a murderous fire, and the light cavalry of Lasalle charged the best lancers of Albuquerque, who fled in a sudden and wild panic. Whence come these qualms of fear, that change in a brief moment the character of a combatant, and the face of a battle? Cuesta, a brave old officer, galloped to rally them, but in vain — the day was lost. Right and left the Spanish cavalry were flying from the field; Cuesta himself was thrown from his horse, and well nigh taken, but rescued by his two nephews and his staff. General Frias, who commanded the Spanish infantry of the centre, was severely wounded, and fell into the hands of the enemy. At this moment, while the Spanish regiments on the right

might yet have been withdrawn in columns, and preserved, Eguia would not give the necessary orders himself, nor suffer Albuquerque to do so. The Spanish troops, perplexed, broken and dismayed, fell beneath the swords of the French horsemen in such numbers, that the savage work of slaughter is spoken of as a severe labour, that quite exhausted the victors. The infantry of the French, following hard after their cavalry in the pursuit, gave good help in this slaughter with their bayonets; and a French officer, who was present, has observed, that "the vengeance of the soldiers fell chiefly upon such of the Spaniards as were without a military uniform." Here again, as in all other of the Spanish battles, the patriot peasants lay down in their dress of toil, after new and unaccustomed labours, to take a rest more deep than the sweet siesta. More than half of the Spanish forces lay stretched upon the field, and several thousands were made prisoners.

In La Mancha the army of La Carolina was defeated at Ciudad Real, with the loss of its guns, 1000 or more slain, and 3000 taken prisoners. The Spaniards were commanded by Cartoajal, and amounted in number to 12,000: 10,000 French troops under Sebastiani attacked them. There is nothing to be observed upon this: the Spaniards were, of course, beaten. They fled by Almagro, and never halted till they felt their feet firm upon the mountains of the Sierra Morena, to the foot of which barrier the French cavalry closely pursued them; but amid these hilly fastnesses the fugitives rallied, and, collecting again in considerable num-

bers round the villages of that district, resolved upon other trials of their arms. The combat of Ciudad Real was fought on the 27th of March; and the horsemen of Sebastiani's corps are said to have handled their sabres with little of mercy.

CHAP. XIII.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY MARCHES AGAINST SOULT.—PASSES THE DOURO.—RETAKES OPORTO.—DELIVERS THE NORTHERN PROVINCES OF PORTUGAL FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE FRENCH.

Upon this scene of doubt, difficulty, and distraction, sir Arthur Wellesley appeared, resolved for action and confident of success. He instantly decided upon offensive movements, and, after satisfying himself that no concert or communication could possibly exist at that moment between the armies of Victor and Soult, determined to fall upon the latter general, and dislodge him from Oporto. A few marches would carry the British to the scene of action; and as soon as the north of Portugal should be delivered from the presence of the enemy, he meditated a prompt return to the Tagus, and an attack upon the corps of Victor. In the mean time it was necessary to provide for the calmness of Lisbon, though there was little to apprehend as to its real security; for Victor was eighteen marches from that capital. As a measure of precaution, however, and with a view to impede and delay Victor, should he attempt a rapid rush upon Lisbon, two British battalions, two regiments of British cavalry, and 8000 Portuguese troops were disposed along the right bank of the Tagus; the flying bridges at Abrantes and Villa

Velha were taken up, and a militia regiment and part of the Lusitanian legion were posted at Alcantara, under the orders of colonel Mayne, with instructions to blow up that noble bridge, should the advance of the enemy compel him to retreat. The whole of these troops were under the command of general Mackenzie. Having made this disposition on the line of the Tagus, he communicated to Cuesta his own plan of operations, and urged upon that leader the prudence of his remaining strictly on the defensive until he could bring back the British to his support, and, by a combined attack upon the corps of Victor, ensure success.

The head quarters of the British army now quitted Lisbon; halted at Pombal on the 1st of May, and reached Coimbra on the 2d. Here, again, shouts of welcome crowds of gazers, illuminations and bonfires greeted the advancing army; and, sir Arthur Wellesley, in particular, was received with passionate enthusiasm. Popularity like this is, to the ear of a leader, as the music of a coming triumph; nor is any heart so calm and governed as to remain untroubled by those throbs which are the presages of victory. The allied army was concentrated at Coimbra on the 5th of May. It was distributed into seven brigades of infantry of the line, two brigades of German infantry, one brigade of guards, and one of light cavalry. In the organisation of this force, four of the best Portuguese battalions were incorporated with British brigades. Marshal Beresford retained under his personal command a body of six thousand Portuguese. The force of Trant was on the Vouga, that of Silveira on the Tamega, and sir Robert Wilson

was posted with some Portuguese troops (not his legion) at Vizeu.

The position of Soult at Oporto was difficult and critical; he commanded the ground on which his troops reposed; but in his front, on his rear, on all sides were enemies, and, strange to say, in his very camp there were conspirators and traitors, and those of no mean rank, and of an influence to create no small alarm for the safety and the subordination of his army. These conspirators were republicans: their project was to make a truce with the English army, to elect a chief, and, leading their discontented soldiers back into France, to curb or overthrow the emperor, and change the French government. D'Argenton, an adjutant major, was one of the principal of these discontented men, and he contrived two visits to the British head-quarters. He had an interview with sir Arthur Wellesley at Lisbon, and again at Coimbra; but sir Arthur, suspecting both the extent and importance of the conspiracy to be greatly exaggerated, and, moreover, disliking the intrigue, and, with the exception of the unfortunate d'Argenton, despising the malcontents, refused all favour to their project, and regulated his operations without any reference to their proceedings.

The plan of his movements was already completed, when intelligence was brought that the bridge of Amarante had been forced, and that Silveira was driven over the Douro. The position of Amarante was most important; for while held by Silveira, the most favourable road for the retreat of the French was closed against them. Soult directed

Laborde and Loison to gain it at any price. This post, though daily assaulted, was maintained from the 18th of April to the 30th with bravery and firmness. Colonel Patrick, a valiant and zealous officer, serving with the Portuguese troops, was killed in this gallant defence; but Soult, bringing forward a strong reinforcement in person, carried it upon the 2d of May, and Silveira was compelled to retire.

This news reached Coimbra on the 4th of May; the measures of sir Arthur Wellesley were of necessity changed, but he was not slow to adapt them to circumstances as they arose. Upon the 6th of May, he directed marshal Beresford to march with 6,000 Portuguese, two British battalions, five companies of riflemen, and a squadron of heavy cavalry, by Vizeu upon Lamego.

Upon the 7th the advanced guard of the main army was in motion upon the Oporto road: it was followed by the whole force, which amounted to about 14,500 infantry, 1,500 cavalry, and twenty-four guns, of which six were 3-pounders. The troops were organised in four divisions: one of cavalry, and three of infantry; they marched in two columns, — one of which, consisting of a division of foot under general Hill, moved upon Aveiro; while the stronger column advanced directly upon the Vouga.

These corps halted on the 8th to give marshal Beresford time to gain his point upon the Upper Douro, before the combined attack should be made. Upon the night of the 9th, the main force, with sir Arthur Wellesley, was upon the line of the Vouga.

Upon this same evening general Hill embarked at Aveiro upon the lake of Ovar, with one brigade

of his division; and, as soon as the astonished fishermen recovered from their surprise, and understood the object for which their boats had been seized, they manned them with such readiness, and worked so heartily, that the troops were landed at Ovar by sunrise, and the right flank of the enemy was already turned.

That same day, marshal Beresford having united the corps of Wilson with his own, drove Loison to Amarante, and turned the French left.

Sir Arthur Wellesley in person meditated the surprise of general Franceschi on the morning of the 10th at Albergaria Nova. The plan was perfect; but, by petty delays, trifling accidents, and difficulties of ground, the combination was frustrated, and the opportunity lost. Our cavalry came upon Franceschi in broad daylight, and found him steady in position; his horsemen in a ready line, with their flank resting on a wood full of tirailleurs. As soon as sir Arthur came up with general Paget's division of infantry, he dislodged the French infantry from the wood; but Franceschi, though briskly pursued, made good his retreat to Oliveira without any serious loss; and marching all night joined Mermet the next morning at Grijon. Here the French were drawn up in position, on a range of steep hills across the road: they occupied a wood on their right flank, their left was not protected; the ground in their front was sufficiently strong. The 16th Portuguese regiment drove their infantry out of the wood on their right; the German infantry marched upon the left, and turned it without a check. The head of the British column was already

engaged with them in front; but, as soon as their position was fairly turned, they drew off to the rear, and being closely pursued by two squadrons of cavalry under brigadier general Stewart, they lost a few killed, and had about a hundred taken prisoners. They halted again for a short space upon the heights of Carvalho, but, as soon as the British infantry came up they continued their retreat. This flying combat ceased at dusk. The British columns passed the night in repose; the French, under cover of the the darkness, crossed the Douro, and destroyed the bridge.

Marshal Soult made his arrangements for evacuating Oporto, under an impression that general Loison still maintained himself on the Tamega; and that, if any effort was made by the British to cross the Douro, vessels would come round by sea, and the passage be attempted below the city. All the boats on the river were moored upon the northern bank, which was vigilantly patroled. The artillery and baggage moved off leisurely on the road to Amarante; and Soult, feeling his retreat secure, determined on halting in the city another day, that all things might be conducted with good order and regularity. Easy about all above the city, he took up his own station in a house which commanded a fine view down the river, and fixed his personal attention upon that quarter, not a little interested, in all probability, to see what the maritime English would do. From the convent of Sarea the hero of Assaye was looking down upon that large volume of waters which the Douro rolls swiftly to the sea in a bed three hundred yards wide, even

at Oporto itself, where the stream is confined between high and rocky shores. By eight o'clock in the morning the British columns were assembled at Villa Nova, in rear of the convent of Sarea, and concealed from the enemy by the height on which it stands. With hearts and arms all ready for the fray, they lay thoughtless on the ground, little dreaming of any trouble, while their great captain, with that moral courage which is his preeminent distinction, was deciding upon one of those actions which great men alone attempt. "Let a boat be found," was his anxious demand to the officers of his staff. Colonel Waters was the active and enterprising man, whose fortune it was to find a little skiff which had crossed from the city in the night. It lay among the bushes just at a spot where there is a bend in the course of the river, concealed at that point by wood, at the distance of about a mile and a half from the city. Standing near the skiff was the prior of a convent, and three or four peasants. Colonel Waters leaped into the little boat, and persuaded these peasants to accompany him: they evaded the French patroles, and returned from the opposite bank with three or four barges. In the mean time guns were brought up to the convent of Sarea, and planted in battery: and major-general Murray was directed, with his column, to march to Barca de Avintas, three miles higher up the river, and, availing himself of any transport which he could find there, to effect a passage.

It was about ten o'clock in the day when the report was made to sir Arthur that one boat was

brought to the point of passage which he had selected. "Well, let the men cross," was his brief order; and an officer and twenty-five soldiers of the Buffs passed over to a large unoccupied building called the Seminary, just opposite Sarea, and, without even a stir of alarm, took quiet possession. They were speedily followed by two other boats; in one of which was general Paget, an intrepid officer, whose youthful heroism in Egypt had already won him a name, and who now threw himself, with only three companies of foot, upon the line of a French army.

These last had scarce leaped upon the bank and gained the Seminary before the drums and trumpets of the enemy were sounding alarms; troops hurried out of the city in masses hastily assembled, and advanced with eager fury to destroy the small but resolute band, which, from the Seminary walls, was to brave their fierce assault. Their attack was violent, and their fire heavy; but the little party maintained itself stoutly, and was, at every return of the boats, now receiving a small accession of strength and confidence. As he stood upon the roof of the Seminary, general Paget was struck down by a severe wound very early in the engagement; but general Hill, a man of the same firm courage and the same devoted zeal, was at hand, and immediately took his place. The enemy's numbers were very great; their musketry sharp and incessant; and their artillery began to play upon the building. But the English batteries from the convent of Sarea swept the bank on either flank of the Seminary; and the French assault was of

necessity confined to the area and gateway in the front. The struggle was obstinate; and, as yet, there was no appearance of the troops of Murray from the side of Avintas. It was so anxious a moment, that sir Arthur himself would have crossed to the Seminary but for the earnest remonstrance of those about him. He saw, too, that Hill, one of those gallant and steady lieutenants upon whom the commander of an army may always rely, maintained his post with signal heroism, and had now gotten the Buffs, 48th, 66th, and 16th Portuguese under his command. While this the great combat of the day was going forward with a stern loudness and much bloodshed, the division of general Sherbrooke, which had advanced, at the moment the passage of the river first began, to that part of the bank where the old boat-bridge had been cut away, was hailed by the citizens from the windows and walls of Oporto, with the lively gestures and vehement shouts of invitation.

They readily brought boats across to transport the British to the right bank, and, as the guards and 29th were ferried over, the wall, which runs along the river, was lined with people waving their caps and handkerchiefs, and vociferating "vivas" with a mad exultation. The same was their reception in the streets, up which they hastened to form upon the enemy's right. Every balcony was animate with smiles, and noisy with welcome.

The appearance of Sherbrooke's division on the French right, and the head of Murray's columns descending upon their left from Avintas, decided the contest. The French were defeated; and, being

pursued by heavy volleys from the battalions of Hill, and from the leading corps of Sherbrooke's division, they passed along the Vallonga road in haste and confusion, escaping far too easily from the column led by general Murray: but general Charles Stewart and major Hervey, with two squadrons of cavalry, pressed forward from this column with a laudable impatience and charged the enemy's rear guard. In this *mêlée* Hervey lost an arm. The dragoons had the satisfaction of falling upon the enemy with some effect more than once, but they were not supported, and were soon recalled. Thus the engagement closed. The French were in full march to the rear, the English slept upon the ground they had so gallantly taken; and thus was the passage of the Douro won: an exploit worthy alike of the leader who projected and of the troops who achieved it. In this action, of which it is recorded that Napoleon, the very moment he heard of it, pronounced Wellesley a great general, the British loss was only 120 killed and wounded: such is the reward of boldness and decision. That of the French amounted to 500; and five pieces of artillery were taken on the field. Much ammunition and fifty guns were found in the arsenal; and the French hospitals fell into the victors' hands. The city of Oporto was illuminated the same night, and the sounds of rejoicing echoed through the streets; yet, in many places, they were slippery with blood, and lamps were shining upon the naked dead. In the course of the day there had been fighting in the suburbs, and the French who had fallen were left dead where they lay. To protect the French prisoners from the vindictive

fury of a revengeful people, was the first act of sir Arthur Wellesley. He issued a proclamation to the inhabitants of Oporto the very next morning, calling upon them to be forbearing and humane to all such of the unfortunate individuals as might be taken captive in these operations.

Upon the evening of the capture, the British head-quarters were established in the very house which marshal Soult had occupied; and a dinner in preparation for him was served up at the table of sir Arthur, — one of those trifling occurrences in warfare, which exhilarate not only the chance partakers of spoil so innocent, but which, as an anecdote mirthful to the soldiery, spreads pleasure very widely through the lines. The following day was principally employed by sir Arthur in arrangements for pursuit. General Murray's Germans were sent forward in the morning of the 13th upon the road of Amarante; and upon the 14th the whole army was again in motion. The contemporary operations of marshal Beresford had been eminently successful; although, certainly, the conduct of general Loison, his opponent, was marked by a timidity so unusual, as to savour strongly of a disobedient and indifferent supineness, if not a designed treachery. He fell back to Mezamfrio on the 10th, suffering himself to be driven by Beresford, and to be followed by Portuguese patroles. On the 11th, he continued his retreat, Beresford skirmishing with his rear. On the 12th, he allowed his outposts, in front of Amarante, to be forced in; and upon the 13th, he abandoned that most important position, and took the route of

Guimaraens; thus criminally exposing the main body under Soult without an effort.

Of these events sir Arthur was yet in ignorance. It was doubtful whether Soult would retire on Gallicia by Ponte de Lima, Valença, and Tuy, or upon Leon by Chaves. To provide for either course, general Murray was directed upon Peñafiel, and the rest of the army followed the lower road towards Valença. Upon the 15th, sir Arthur obtained good intelligence that the French had destroyed both stores and artillery at Peñafiel, and were pushing to Chaves. He himself quickly changed his plan, and, abandoning the lower road, advanced to Braga, and reached it the same day. Beresford, anticipating the orders which had in fact been despatched to him, was already near Chaves, and had moved Sylveira towards Salamondé, that he might occupy the passes of Ruivaens and Melgaçi. But, at this very time, Soult was fifteen miles in advance of Braga, having saved his army by a retreat of most adventurous and hardy efforts, along mountain paths, and across mountain bridges. These last, though guarded by Portuguese, were surprised by one of his chosen officers and a few grenadiers with that still and steady bravery which asks yet firmer nerve than the shock of battle.

About four o'clock on the evening of the 16th, sir Arthur came up with the rear-guard of Soult, which remained at Salamondé to cover the passage of the army over the bridges Ponte Nova and the Saltador: they were well posted, but, nevertheless, they would not stand; and after one discharge

abandoned their position to general Sherbrooke's division, and fled to the Ponte Nova. They were, for a time, concealed by the nature of the ground and by the direction of their retreat, and they attempted a fresh formation: but the English guns were soon up; and opening upon them in that confused and bewildered state, they fell in great numbers. The bridge was choked with lacerated bodies; the rocks around were covered with dead; and wounded men and horses were tumbled headlong into the gulf below.

The scene in the morning, through which the pursuers passed, was dreadful. The French soldiers, harassed, mortified, and knowing that they were hated by the peasants, plundered the villages as they passed along; oftentimes set them on fire also; and murdered many of the inhabitants. Their stragglers were in turn sacrificed by the enraged peasants with inventive cruelties and fearful execrations.

As soon as it was ascertained that Soult had turned off from Montalegre towards Orense, sir Arthur Wellesley determined to relinquish the pursuit; a resolution in which he was confirmed by learning, upon the night of the 17th, that the French in Estremadura had a large detachment moving towards Alcantara. The four brigades at Braga were ordered instantly to march back to Oporto; and all those in advance, and with the head-quarters, were soon halted and countermarched in the same direction. Soult crossed the frontier at Allaritz on the 18th, and on the 19th he reached Orense, without guns or stores, and with the loss

of six thousand men. He had quitted that place ten weeks before with 22,000 good soldiers, and had been further reinforced by 3500 from Tuy. Cannon, equipment, baggage, and one fourth of his army, was lost; but that 19,000 men were brought off in safety, and reserved for future service in the war, was entirely owing to the firmness and the energy of their able and unyielding general.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, having made full arrangements for the defence of these northern provinces, now turned his horse's head towards the Tagus, and bent his mind upon a struggle with Victor.

CHAP. XIV.

STATE OF THE WAR IN GALLICIA AND THE ASTURIAS. — POSITION OF VICTOR. — SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY MARCHES TO THE TAGUS. — ENCAMPS AT ABRANTES. — ADVANCES INTO SPAIN.

THE defeat of Romana at Monterey did not affect that noble man further than to stimulate him to new and increased exertions. Having zealously repaired his losses, and being reinforced by 3000 men from Castile, he surprised a French post at Villa Franca del Bierzo upon the 17th of April. In this affair, which was planned and conducted with secrecy, expedition, and boldness, Romana captured eight hundred effective French soldiers; and the disposition of his own force was so good, that he only lost 100 men killed and wounded. It may be here noticed, that a part of those very men who were defeated in the Val des Orres in January, collected again between Tuy and Vigo, and formed a part of the insurgent force of peasants to which the latter place surrendered on the 27th of March. The British frigates the Lively and Venus assisted in this capture; Captain Mackinley of the Lively, and Don Pablo Murillo commanding the Spanish soldiers, negotiated the terms. One thousand three hundred prisoners, upwards of 400 horses, sixty covered waggons, some stores, and the military chest of the second corps, containing £5000, were the solid fruits of this merited success. Meanwhile, all over Gallicia, the

patriots were acting upon the French communications with vigilance and vigour; their moveable columns were daily sustaining severe losses; they had no repose, and, except where they were assembled in large bodies, no security.

After the loss at Villa Franca, they advanced to Lugo, and Romana entered the Asturias. At Navia de Suarna, he quitted his army. Leaving it in charge of Mahi, he proceeded in person to Oviedo, to make enquiry into the conduct of the Asturian junta, whose shameful and corrupt practices were an oppression to the people, and a hinderance to those in arms. By virtue of his authority as captain-general of the province, he dismissed the unworthy members, and appointed others upon whose probity and zeal he could rely. While Romana was thus usefully engaged in reforming abuses and restoring the confidence of the people, the French, by whom an individual like Romana, of public integrity, tried courage, and unabated zeal, was viewed with mingled sentiments of respect and fear, turned all their attention to this province. Marshal Ney planned a combined movement, upon a very extensive scale, to destroy the army of Romana and the Asturian levy. In this last force, which amounted to 15,000 peasants, was included the active band of guerrillas, led by Porlier the marquisetto. This force, commanded by Ballasteros, held Infiesta to the east of Oviedo, and Castropol upon the coast; to execute the movement resolved on, Kellerman with about 9000 men was to march upon Oviedo; general Bonnet was to advance from St. Andero against the Asturian levy, and Ney was to direct in person

the attack upon the army under Mahi. During the absence of marshal Ney, general Marchand was to provide for the war in Gallicia: three battalions were left at St. Jago, three at Corunna, one at Ferrol, three, with a regiment of cavalry, at Lugo; with the marshal himself were twelve battalions and three regiments of horse. As he advanced upon Mahi, that general retired by his left from Navia de Suarna, and, declining the contest, threw himself into the valley of the Syl. Ney pushed forwards to Oviedo with such rapidity, that he was within a march of that city before Romana, who had only one regiment with him, knew of his approach. Nevertheless he gained a little time, by checking the enemy at the bridge of Peñaflor, though of course sufficient only to preserve the regiment and secure his own safety. These few men he sent to Infiesta, and embarked on board an English vessel himself at Gihon. On the 18th of May they entered Oviedo, and were joined by Kellerman. Troops were sent in pursuit of Romana, but happily in vain. When Bonnet marched from St. Andero, Ballasteros, by a bold and happy movement, threw himself upon that unguarded place, and retook it from the French, making prisoners the garrison and hospital, in all 1100 men. There were some small French craft in the port, on board of which the staff and sick officers attempted to escape; but the Amelia and Statira British frigates, arriving off the harbour at this time, captured these vessels, and intercepted their flight.

While Ney was absent in the Asturias, the Spanish general Carrera, and with him Murillo, at-

tacked the French force near St. Jago de Compostella, under Maucune, and totally routed it. The French lost six hundred men and their guns, and fled in terror to Corunna. At the same time Mahi, as soon as Ney had marched onwards to Oviedo, came forth from the valley of the Syl, and closely invested the force under general Fournier, at Lugo, on the 19th of May.

This uneasy state of the French in Gallicia was a little relieved by the return of Soult from Portugal, who marched instantly upon Lugo. Mahi fell back upon the 22d to Mondonedo, and Lugo was occupied by the marshal on the 23d; Ney, returning into Gallicia by the coast road, joined marshal Soult on the 30th. At Mondonedo, Romana, having disembarked at Ribadeo, again took command of his troops, and, after a most skilful march, he led them across the royal road a little above Lugo, placed them once more in the valley of the Syl, and was soon again in active communication with the Spanish leaders at St. Jago de Compostella and at Vigo. Bonnet retrieved the misfortune of St. Ander soon after this, by the total defeat of the troops of Ballasteros on the 11th of June, and by the release of all the prisoners taken from his own division, as well as those captured at Villa Franca by Romana: Ballasteros himself escaped on board an English ship.

It is impossible to record all these efforts of the Spaniards, and especially those of that best and noblest among them, La Romana, without sincere and warm admiration. And when we consider the state of Romana's corps in January, and the short time he ever had of repose to organise the rude

levy by which he was surrounded, and the generals and the troops to whom he was opposed, we feel his reputation to have been greatly won, and deserving of all praise.

After his triumph at Medellin, Victor had established his head-quarters at Merida, but had refused to advance upon Portugal, unless the division of Lapisse, from Salamanca, was directed to join him by Alcantara. Nevertheless he made an effort to possess himself of Badajos by opening an intrigue with some of the richer inhabitants of that place, who, either from weariness or timidity, were disinclined for any further resistance, and willing to betray the city. This effort proved abortive: the traitors were discovered and arrested, and their nefarious design was baffled. In the beginning of April, general Lapisse, who had remained idle with ten thousand men at Ledesma and Salamanca from January to March, advanced towards Bejar; but finding the passes already occupied, he threw himself suddenly to the right upon the Lusitanian legion, drove it under the guns of Ciudad Rodrigo, and, having summoned that place, took up a position behind the Agueda. Lapisse had been again ordered by the king to advance to Abrantes, in pursuance of Napoleon's instructions for the combined movements against Portugal: disregarding these orders, that general abandoned all connection with the corps of Soult, to whose operations and fate he had shown the most wilful indifference, and marched by the pass of Perales and Alcantara to join Victor at Merida. A body of Spaniards attempted to stop him at Alcantara, but he routed them, and plundered

the city. Sir Robert Wilson, with Don Carlos d'España, and with a great crowd of volunteer peasantry, followed close upon his steps; and a post under colonel Mayne, as has been already noticed, was established in that place. The recovery of Alcantara was now ordered by the king, and Victor moved down from Merida with that object. Colonel Mayne, who had two thousand Portuguese infantry, a few horsemen, and six guns, made a very handsome resistance, and sustained a considerable loss. He then retired in good order, failing, however, in his attempt to destroy the bridge. The French crossed it, and pushed their patroles into Beira, in the direction of Castello Branco; but, finding that general Mackenzie was on the alert, and had come forward to Sobreira Formosa, and hearing also that Soult was in retreat, they crossed the Tagus again, abandoned Alcantara, and marched to their old ground at Merida. The castle of Merida, in which Victor had left a detachment, was attacked, during his absence, by Cuesta; but, as the French again appeared, the Spaniards repassed the Guadiana, and took post at Zafra. On the other side, the Spaniards in the valley of the Tagus began to be so formidable as to alarm Victor for the security of his communications. He therefore sent a division to Almaraz to watch the bridge, and fixed his head-quarters at Torremocha. Colonel Mayne again took possession of Alcantara.

By the 7th of June, sir Arthur Wellesley had brought his troops from the Douro, and they encamped upon the southern bank of the Tagus; but although they had been brought up with care, and

by easy marches, they were sickly, and were daily losing men. The army remained stationary at Abrantes till the latter end of June; and sir Arthur had the mortification of seeing day after day roll by, the full value of which none could so well estimate as he, without the power of advancing into Spain. But it was not possible to move without money. He could neither obtain the supplies of the country, nor could he command means of transport, either by land or water, for such stores as our commissariat had already in possession. His men were without shoes; his officers and soldiers totally without pay, and distressed for common necessaries; and his hospitals were full. Though he had been reinforced by 5000 men since his operations on the Douro, he had only 22,000 men effective, present, under arms. He must have felt the inadequacy of this force to great and extended operations; but that of which he had now to complain was, that, small as were the military means placed at his disposal, even of these, owing to a negligent mismanagement at home, he had not the free use. With an empty military chest, nothing could be undertaken. This great and shameful irregularity in providing for the pay of the troops, the followers of the army, and for the vast and necessary demands of the commissariat, obtained frequently throughout the war. Who were interested in the delay of these remittances, it is not for us to say: to ascribe it to indolence and mal-arrangement does not account to us for the fact of so frequent a repetition of the same neglect. We dwell upon this, because it fettered and hampered the illustrious

subject of our memoir on the present occasion, and because, as he was a man of great public integrity, and with the strictest notions concerning probity and good faith in all dealings with the inhabitants of the Peninsula, and in all engagements made with followers; and desirous, both as their protector and commander, that his soldiers, for the sake of justice and discipline, should be regularly paid, we know that the neglect here spoken of weighed often and heavily, throughout the war, upon his firm and elastic mind.

It is true that an excellent spirit prevailed in the army at this time, as at all others: there were no murmurs, no complainings in the ranks; no doubts as to the final and just settlement of all their claims. The men had a confidence in their commander's honour, a trust in his talents, a belief in his fortune, and an admiration of his courage. Hence they would have endured any hardship, have borne any privation, and have faced any danger, if they only saw Wellesley in the camp. It was the consciousness of this noble feeling in his troops that made him more keenly alive to the unnecessary privations and distresses to which, from the want of pay, they were not unfrequently subjected. Although we may seem to be anticipating by this last observation, still we are glad to place it in the fore front, for the benefit of those (we hope few) readers who think that a military commander has nothing to do but order a drum to beat, and an army marches; and to order another to beat, and it fights.

We return to the camp of Abrantes. The Spa-

niards were most importunate for offensive operations, and for the advance of the British; but no Spanish general could be so eager to tread the onward road as he who had already commenced his career with an achievement, which not one upon the same scale in the annals of European warfare, had hitherto surpassed. After much correspondence with Cuesta, commanding the Spanish army in Estremadura, a general brave and true, but old, without talent, bigotted to his own antiquated notions, and with the obstinacy of age stout in his own opinions, sir Arthur Wellesley prevailed with him to adopt that line of operations which seemed to him most promising for successful results.

At the end of June, sir Arthur commenced his march into Spain by the northern banks of the Tagus, with a view to join the army of Cuesta on the Tietar, and to combine with him an offensive movement on Madrid. The Spanish forces in the south at this period exceeded sixty thousand. The corps of Cuesta amounted to thirty-eight thousand, that of Venegas to twenty-five thousand effective. In the English camp on the frontier were twenty-two thousand good soldiers; and it was known to their commander, that a reinforcement of eight thousand was at Lisbon. The number of French troops disposed for the protection of Madrid, was, at the lowest, fifty thousand. On the 27th of June, the English army marched from Abrantes to Spain. The army moved by both banks of the Tagus. Upon the 10th of July the divisions were all united at Plasencia, and were joined by a regiment of

cavalry and two of infantry from Lisbon. The French force under marshal Victor, which had, previous to this advance of the British, retired from Torremocha, had now taken post at Talavera de la Reyna, and the Spaniards under Cuesta were at Almaraz. The position of the British army, and its line of march up the valley of the Tagus, were not free from considerable danger: for beyond the mountains, on its left, lay the French corps of Soult and Ney; and although the intercepted letters of those marshals drew so strong a picture of their difficulties, that it was scarcely probable they could attempt any offensive movements upon his flank, still that which was possible demanded attention; and sir Arthur made the very best arrangements in his power to provide a security against any sudden irruption from the north into the valley of the Tagus. He instructed Beresford to look carefully to the defence of Puerto Perales; and with great difficulty prevailed on the Spanish generals to make a detachment for the occupation of Bejar and of the Puerto de Baños, as also to furnish a second for the pass of Perales.

Before, however, the arrangement for the Spaniards occupying Bejar and Baños could be concluded to his satisfaction, he proceeded to confer with Cuesta, and to concert with him offensive operations.

This conference lasted two days; but it was at last arranged that the British and Spanish armies should march against Victor on the 18th; that Venegas, with his body of Spaniards should advance through La Mancha to the Upper Tagus, directing his march upon Fuente Duenas and Villa Maurique, to engage

the attention of Sebastiani, and prevent him, if possible, from uniting his corps to that of Victor.

The path of duty in Spain was not one easy to be trodden by a British general. Previous to his advance into Spain, sir Arthur Wellesley had sent forward commissaries to all the necessary points to arrange for the supply of his troops, and to purchase mules for transport. From the supreme junta he had received full assurance that he should be well supplied with every thing his soldiers could need; and the junta despatched an officer of rank and authority, don Lonzano de Torres, intendant-general, to fulfil the promises which they had made, and upon the faith of which sir Arthur Wellesley had come out of Portugal with few means of transport, and without magazines. Before, however, he had made five marches from Castello Branco, it was discovered that these promises were good for nothing. The British could neither procure means of transport nor obtain supplies; neither did the Spanish local authorities use any exertion to aid the British commissaries in their efforts to provide them. Moreover, upon the part of the inhabitants there was manifested a degree of suspicion and ill will towards the English, very provoking, not difficult to be accounted for, but not easy to be overcome.

The difficulty of subsisting his army was so great that as early as the 16th of July sir Arthur wrote to inform Cuesta of his distress; and stated his resolution not to proceed beyond the Alberche, unless the wants of his army were supplied, although ready to advance to that river according to the plan already concerted between them.

In pursuance of this plan the British army from Plasencia was to pass the Tietar at the Venta de Bazagona, and to march upon Oropesa. Sir Robert Wilson with his Lusitanian legion, a few dragoons, and two Spanish battalions, was to gain possession of the passes of Arenas which lead upon Avila, and of the pass of San Pedro Bernardo, which leads upon Madrid.

The English troops did not break up from the camp at Plasencia, till the 17th. Upon the 20th they reached Oropesa, and were halted there for one day. Upon the 21st, Cuesta with the Spaniards passed through Oropesa and marching forwards, united his whole force at Velada. On the same day Victor called in all his detachments and foraging parties, and took post behind the Alberche with two divisions of infantry, leaving a strong rear-guard at Talavera.

On the 22d the allies advanced; and Cuesta marching along the high road to that place came up with 2000 French dragoons under general Latour Maubourg, drawn up on the table land of Gamonal. The French general checked the leading column of the Spaniards; and maintaining a good countenance, compelled general Zayas to halt, and to show all his people without any necessity. It was always easy to make the Spaniards commit those absurdities.

Until the head of the British columns appeared upon his right, Latour Maubourg did not move; and then retired in the best possible order, supported by infantry, behind the Alberche, marching most leisurely, and sustaining no loss, although in the presence of many batteries and 6000 Spanish

horse. We name this only for the purpose of showing with what description of force the British were allied in these operations, and how little was to be expected from them: because, knowing, as we do, what French dragoons are, and what this Spanish cavalry was; knowing what an officer Latour Maubourg was; and that the Spanish horse was under the orders of those who without his talent or experience were also without any confidence in the discipline, skill, or steadiness, of their own unformed cavalry; it would have been a matter of surprise to us, if 2000 of Napoleon's dragoons, supported by infantry, had not effected a quiet and orderly retreat on this occasion.

We would here remark, that when, upon the 10th of July, sir Arthur Wellesley visited the camp of Cuesta near the Col de Mirabete, that general drew out his forces for the inspection of the British commander.

The guides who were conducting sir Arthur and his adjutant-general lost their way; and they did not arrive at the Spanish encampment till it was already dark. The troops, however, who had been four hours waiting, were still under arms with the veteran Cuesta at their head. Sir Arthur was received with a general discharge of artillery; and a number of large torches being lighted up, he passed the entire Spanish line in review by their red and flaring blaze. In this manner he passed about 6000 cavalry drawn up *in rank entire*, and not less than twenty battalions of infantry. They were all remarkably fine looking men; but many of them were extremely young, too young for service;

in fact, raw recruits of a boyish age: yet were they well made, stout, and to all appearance hardy. With the exception of a few battalions they were very ill appointed; not clothed in uniform; and were, in general, in want of shoes. It was immediately seen from their position under 'arms, and from the awkwardness with which they handled their firelocks, that they were a raw undisciplined levy. Some corps there were of regularly appointed effective soldiers; such as the Irish brigades, the marine battalions from Cadiz, and the provisional battalions formed out of the wreck of those brave grenadiers who had fought so well, and fallen in such numbers in the early part of that fatal battle at Medellin. To speak generally, however, the army was little better than a crowd of peasants disposed in battalions after the rule of military organisation; armed, indeed, partially like soldiers, but unacquainted with a soldier's duty. Again, their cavalry was well mounted, but very ill disciplined; ignorant of the most common movements and formations; and, with the exception of a very few corps, miserably equipped, and not fit to take the field. The artillery was numerous, and not a bad artillery for fire; but the order and arrangements of this arm were all after the old system: their movements were encumbered and slow; they were brought into action with difficulty; and, if retreat became necessary, were seldom saved. Such 'was this Spanish army! such in character were they all! seldom one so good, many greatly inferior. We are as sure as if we had been by the side of sir Arthur, that as he rode down the Spanish line, and

saw the swart Iberians in the red light of the torches which were held aloft as he passed along, and as he listened to the noisy welcomes of the cannon, and the loud confusion of sounds, when battalion after battalion shouldered to receive him, he was forcibly reminded of India, and of all the noisy parade of those half-disciplined hosts which are found in pompous array before the elephants of the native princes. It is not improbable that the memory of the inefficiency of oriental troops was awakened at the sight; and that as he lay down upon his pillow, he felt more than ever how entirely he must depend upon his own steady legions, and his own unshaken resolve.

When upon the 21st of July Cuesta passed through Oropesa, sir Arthur in turn drew out the British army; and the brave old man (for with all his faults, prejudices, and obstinacy, he was brave as an aged lion), looked upon the firm battalions of the English with an admiration he could not repress.

Victor, after being joined by his rear guard under Latour Maubourg, showed no disposition to quit his ground on the Alberche. He was in position behind that river with only 20,000 men. The stream was fordable, and both his right and centre lay open to attack. Sir Arthur Wellesley was eager to avail himself of the advantage offered by this strange temerity. An attack was agreed upon for the morning of the 23d; but when the English general came to the quarters of Cuesta to arrange the details of the attack, the old man was gone to bed, and not to be disturbed. At three in the morning the British columns were under arms, but Cuesta was not to

be spoken with till seven o'clock, and then refused to join in the attack; offering, among other reasons, his objection to fight upon a Sunday!—a strange objection, which even the sound sense of a converted chief in one of the islands of Polynesia not many years ago forbade him to entertain; as if a struggle on the sabbath day against those who had desecrated the altars of Spain, and stained her hearths with blood, was not a permitted and a sacred duty.

Throughout the whole of the 23d Victor remained quiet. It has been thought that he maintained a secret correspondence with some traitor in the Spanish camp, and was thus advised that no attack would take place.

Cuesta, however, was prevailed upon to agree to an attack for the morning of the 24th; and, having proposed to the English general to make a *reconnoisance* of the French position, the old gentleman arrived in a cumbrous coach and six at the appointed place to the surprise of sir Arthur and of his active staff.

The allies were in motion before the dawn; but, when they reached the Alberche, not a French soldier was to be seen: Victor had retired in the night on the Toledo road to Torrijos. The direction of his retreat, and his abandonment of the Madrid road, was probably decided by the movements of sir Robert Wilson, who had reached Escalona on the 23d; a town only eight leagues from Madrid, and in rear of Victor.

There is, however, no doubt that he would have declined engaging under such disadvantageous and dangerous circumstances at all events; and it is

certain that he was fully informed on the evening of the 23d of the intention to attack him.

Sir Arthur Wellesley was mortified but not surprised to find that the enemy had decamped. He knew that to pursue an army determined on retreat, and resolved upon declining battle, was never wise without the situation of the pursuer was such that he could command supplies and resources, and be enabled to maintain every step in advance which might be taken:—he was not supplied—he was leagued with an obstinate and intractable old man; fearless, indeed, in his own person of the shock of battle, but as ignorant of the conduct of war as one of his own mules.

Now, therefore, sir Arthur repeated his former declaration, that *beyond the Alberche* he would not move, and, moreover, threatened, that if his wants, representations, and suggestions for the public good were thus continually disregarded by the supreme junta, and the authorities of Spain military and civil to whom he was referred, he would withdraw from Spain altogether.

CHAP. XV.

THE BATTLE OF TALAVERA.—THE ARRIVAL OF SOULT AT PLASENCIA. — THE MOVEMENTS OF SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY.— THE SPANIARDS BEATEN AT ARZOBISKO. — VANEGAS DEFEATED AT ALMONACID.

Intelligence reached Madrid on the 22d of July that the allies were at Talavera, in front of Victor, and that a body of them, under sir Robert Wilson, had penetrated to Escalona. Joseph sent instantly to Soult, who had already assembled his army in the vicinity of Salamanca, and directed him to march upon Plasencia; a plan recommended and urged by Soult himself, and originated by Napoleon. It will be seen how much Wellesley and his army were in the thoughts of the Emperor, by the fact of his having written a private despatch to marshal Soult from Ratisbon, the imperial head-quarters, directing him to concentrate the second, the fifth, and sixth corps, to assume the command of them, and to act with vigour against the English army. "Wellesley," said Napoleon, "will *probably* advance by the Tagus against Madrid: in that case, pass the mountains, fall upon his flank and rear, and crush him." It is worthy of remark, that Napoleon foresaw the line of Wellesley's operations; now, if it was faulty, how came he to regard it as *probable* that the man whose ability and decision had already extorted his admiration would adopt that line? because he felt, we say

lie intuitively felt, that it would have been his own; because he knew that Wellesley could not possibly calculate upon the French making so large a sacrifice of territory in the north, and giving up so much ground as they must do, to act against him from that quarter in any formidable mass; and because the concentration of three corps of the army, under the supreme command of Soult, was not a measure to be expected, without, as was the case, an express authority from the emperor; finally, because it was the only promising line of offensive operations then open; and who so sure to adopt the offensive, as the man who had lately thrown himself across the broad Douro, in the face of a hostile army? On the 10th of July the British advance to Plasencia was made known to Soult, and he then directed Ney to march upon Zamora, with the sixth corps, leaving the dragoons of general Fournier to cover Astorga and Leon. The marshal at this time projected the immediate siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, having satisfied himself that sir Arthur Wellesley meant to operate by the line of the Tagus, and this plan he strongly urged upon the king. It was approved by the king but not assisted; for he could not meet those demands of Soult, a compliance with which was imperatively necessary to the undertaking. Upon the other hand, he rather inclined to the wish that Soult would detach 10,000 men to strengthen Kellerman and Bonnét, and enable them to seize and maintain the Asturias. Against this division of force, Soult remonstrated. He pushed back the duke del Parque upon Ciudad Rodrigo, and thus found that sir Arthur Wellesley had already reached

Plasencia. He now brought Mortier with the fifth corps to Salamanca, and, at the very time that sir Arthur Wellesley was crossing the Tietar, to advance upon Talavera, 50,000 men were already collected by Soult to "pass the mountains, to fall upon his flank, and crush him"—but he was not crushed.

When king Joseph had sent permission to Soult to advance upon Plasencia, he quitted Madrid with his guards and the reserve to join Victor. Sebastiani, who had been watching Vanegas near Damyel, easily blinding that general, returned to Toledo by forced marches; left 3000 men there to engage the attention of Vanegas; and marched with the main body of his corps to join the king and Victor. Their junction was successfully effected on the morning of the 26th of July. The French force thus concentrated behind the River Guadarama, amounted to near 50,000 combatants, and ninety pieces of artillery.

When, upon the 24th, Victor had retired from the Alberche, Cuesta pursued him; but the old man, who had turned a deaf ear to the admonitions of sir Arthur Wellesley, discovered, upon the 26th, that the French had nothing farther from their thoughts than flight. Sir Arthur, though resolute not to pass the Alberche with his army, had foreseen the probable course of affairs, and had sent general Sherbrooke, with the whole of the cavalry and two divisions of infantry, across that river, directing him to march to Cazalegas. From this point he could effectually support the Spaniards on their return, and could communicate with the troops under sir Robert Wilson at Escalona.

In the afternoon of the 26th, on the morning of which day Cuesta had commenced his retreat, the French dragoons passed the Guadarama, drove the Spanish horse from Torrijos, and pursued them to Alcabon. Here they found a division of Spanish infantry with guns, under general Zayas, drawn out upon the plain; and the Spanish cavalry, to the amount of 2000, took post by their side in order of battle. Latour Maubourg, with his steady dragoons, was already advancing upon them, regardless of their cannonade, when a column of French infantry coming up, the Spaniards broke suddenly, and fled in confusion towards St. Ollalla. The duke of Albuquerque arriving upon the field at this moment of disorder, with 3000 Spanish horse, checked the pursuit of the French dragoons; and it is more than probable he thus saved the Spanish army from one of those signal defeats, which was the common result of such a panic as had then possessed one division, and might soon have infected others. The troops of general Sherbrooke marching out of Cazalegas took up a position to favour the retreat of the Spaniards; and behind those firm battalions the Spanish divisions recovered, in some degree, their lost order. Sir Arthur Wellesley, already in the front, saw plainly that the French were resolved upon a battle; and he implored Cuesta to retire to Talavera, and take up the strong and defensive part of that position, in which he thought to give the enemy a meeting. The old Spaniard, brave, proud, and obstinate, refused; said he would not go back one mile further, but fight where he was. At this very time his army was heaped together in a low,

flat, indefensible, piece of ground. They had lost that very morning, in killed, wounded, and above all, in *missing*, near 3000 men; and they lay a ready prey to the imperial eagle. Most happily for them, the French halted at St. Ollalla; and their cavalry, except a few pickets, came not in sight of the allies until the morning of the 27th. Cuesta now yielded to the earnest representations and anxious entreaties of sir Arthur; and is said to have boasted to his staff, that "he had first made the Englishman go down upon his knees;" thus characterising the warm solicitations of the English general. The old Spaniard wanted discernment to perceive that it was the condescension of a strong mind to a weak one; it was the pleading of the skilful physician with the moody patient.

The position chosen by sir Arthur Wellesley for the battle which he saw was at hand had a peculiar and remarkable adaptation to the character of the forces which composed the allied army.

The town of Talavera is built close to the river Tagus: in front of it are many olive grounds and enclosures, alike calculated to cover the troops appointed to its defence, and to conceal their dispositions.

With the town, then, as the fixed point on his extreme right, the British general took up a line which extended about two miles, and was terminated on the left by a commanding hill. The half of this line was confided to the Spaniards:—they lay securely disposed; their right leaning on the river, and their left resting upon a large mound where a field work had been commenced but not completed.

Their front was protected thoroughly by the difficult nature of the ground; by ditches, embankments, mud walls, and other obstacles, which make a position well nigh impregnable. To defend this front, they were drawn up in two close lines with their own cavalry in reserve; while, at no great distance behind the mound was a brigade of British cavalry. The right of the British infantry touched the Spanish left, and stretched its bold array along the naked and open country to the hill on the extreme left; beyond this hill there was a deep valley, which separated it from a mountain of the Gata Chain; and in front of it was a difficult ravine.

The division of general Campbell was on the British right; next to him stood Sherbrooke; then came Mackenzie's ground, held for a while by part of Sherbrooke's division; and the height upon the left, named above as the key of the position was observed by general Hill. Part of the British cavalry at this period was with general Mackenzie in advance. The division of that general was posted in the wood near Casa des Salinas; and a brigade of light cavalry on the plain near him.

About three o'clock on the afternon of the 27th, the French light infantry who headed the march of the enemy came through the wood so suddenly upon the British posts at this place that they were surprised. The hostile columns following close upon their voltigeurs, attacked one brigade of general Mackenzie's division with so great impetuosity, that they were thrown into disorder, driven from their ground, and separated from the other; but this last formed with such rapidity and steadiness, that the

enemy was soon checked; and, covering the retreat of the other corps, this brigade fell back over the plain, supported by two of cavalry in the finest order, and took up ground in the main position. The British cavalry now took post on a rising ground in the valley upon the extreme left, being a little retired to the rear. In the affair at the Casa de Salinas, sir Arthur Wellesley had a very narrow escape of being made prisoner; he being in the Casa at the moment of the surprise.

The French following up their movements, advanced in strength to the left of our position: they took up ground on a hill over against that which was afterwards the post of general Hill, but was at the moment occupied by the brigade of general Mackenzie's division, which, under the command of colonel Donkin, had just made so fine a retreat. The enemy opened a cannonade upon colonel Donkin, and there was a partial action along the whole front of the line. The French sending their light cavalry, supported by voltigeurs, to feel out the true position of the Spaniards, alarmed them into a loud, general, and useless discharge of musketry, in the very midst of which, a body of about 5000, for no discoverable reason, broke their ranks and fled to the rear, without having been attacked at all, and without being pursued. The greater part of them, however, were rallied, and brought back to the position which they had deserted during the night, and Cuesta executed several officers and men of this division after the battle, *selecting them by lot* — a punishment alike barbarous and useless. As the shades of twilight fell upon the two hosts and clouded the field, the French,

who had only been trifling with the Spaniards, made a sudden and fierce assault upon that height on the left, which has been already spoken of as the key of the position, and which was held at the moment by the brigade of colonel Donkin. The colonel repulsed them in front; but his brigade was too weak to defend all points; and they succeeded in turning him on the left, and crowning the summit behind him.

General Hill was moving up to reinforce colonel Donkin, and was giving orders to the colonel of the 48th regiment, when he was fired at from this summit; and not doubting that the shots proceeded from some British stragglers, who mistook the direction of their fire, he rode smartly up, accompanied by his brigade major, Fordyce, to stop them. These two were instantly surrounded by the enemy: Fordyce was killed on the spot; and the hand of a French grenadier was already on the bridle of Hill's charger; but the general spurred his horse hard, broke away, and galloped off. Directing the wounded beast downwards, he met a part of the 29th; and turning, led them up with uncalculating courage to the charge. The old 29th did not disappoint him: they won back the summit at the point of the bayonet. But scarcely had the general placed the 29th, 1st battalion 48th, and 1st battalion of detachments in position by the side of colonel Donkin's brigade, ere a heavy mass of French infantry again advanced; and a violent attack, of which the first was but a prelude, burst upon them. The fire flashed red upon the night; and was delivered so close, that the combatants dis-

cerned each other's formation within a few paces. The British having poured in their deadly volley, rushed on with their bayonets, broke the dark column and drove it down. While this attack was going forwards, a false one, but of some liveliness, was made against the German legion. The loss of the British in the affair at Salinas amounted to about 400; and the combat upon the hill at dusk must have cost full 400 more, besides many valuable officers. The British lay upon their arms all night: the dragoons by their saddled steeds; and the infantry either close to the pile of arms, or with the trusty firelock in the hand. It was a night of watchfulness and alarm, and of sudden and random firings, especially in the Spanish lines. About dawn the enemy again made dispositions to assault the hill. From a corresponding height opposite they opened a furious fire of artillery, which bore not only upon the point of attack, but on the whole British line; many of the guns being pointed towards the centre and right of it. Under cover of this terrible fire two strong columns were formed and led against the British left. They advanced rapid and firm, and ascended the steep and rugged face of the hill with a bearing the most resolute. Again and again they pressed to within a few paces of the summit, and struggled hard for a footing, but as often were they repulsed by the close volleys and quick charges of the gallant regiments under Hill; and at last they retreated altogether, leaving the ground on which they had fought covered with slain. The loss of the English was very considerable; and general Hill himself was severely wounded.

There was a pause in the work of death; for three hours after, this repulse the enemy made no movement; the troops on both sides reposed and refreshed. The British fared scantily enough. During this pause the wounded were removed to the rear; and it is not unworthy of mention, that at a brook, which ran between the two armies, soldiers of both went down to drink, and looked each other in the face friendly, with that mutual admiration which the brave feel towards those foes who valiantly withstand them.

Soon after mid-day, the French infantry again stood to their arms, their cavalry mounted, and their troops were every where in motion. By two o'clock the dispositions of the French generals were completed; and four columns of attack, destined to bear with all their power upon the English army alone, were assembled at their allotted stations. Eighty pieces of artillery opened their dread thunder upon the British line, and lacerated the firm ranks which ever as they did so closed upon the chasms. Under this fire, the French columns, with clouds of skirmishers in their front, pressed forwards to the battle. One of these fell upon the division of general Campbell, which joined the Spanish left. It was received with such steadiness, that until close to the English regiments not a shot was fired on it; but then came the volley, fatal and true, followed by the firm charge, by which they were effectually repulsed. Campbell took from them ten guns in battery, which they attempted to recover, but they were charged in flank with great spirit by a regiment of Spanish horse. Two Spanish battalions assisted

general Campbell in the repulse of this attack with much zeal and bravery. Thus the British right was victorious and secure. Upon the left, a division of the enemy's infantry, supported by cavalry, advanced up the great valley to turn the hill, already so fiercely disputed. Beyond it, another body was marching to occupy the mountain. For this last movement sir Arthur was already provided, having obtained from Cuesta in the morning a division of Spanish infantry, to be posted there in observation. The principal part of the British cavalry being at the head of the valley, he sent orders to general Anson's brigade, composed of the 23d light dragoons and the 1st regiment King's German Legion, to charge the French infantry, and check their advance. These orders were promptly and bravely, but not intelligently, obeyed. Neither was the true moment taken by this brigade, nor was it kept in hand as it advanced; so that coming upon the brink of a ravine, which lay between the assailants and the assailed, the formation of the squadrons was broken, and the 23d, being in full career, plunged down into the ravine, receiving as they did so the murderous fire of the French squares, and fell over each other in wild disorder; but the gallant men, whose horses yet kept their feet, spurred strong up the opposite bank, and major Frederick Ponsonby rallied and led them onwards, nothing daunted by this perilous mischance. They passed between the French squares under a hot fire, and fell upon a brigade of French chasseurs; but their combat was not with these alone, for some Polish lancers and Westphalian horse rode also

against them; and the heroic 23d, leaving more than half their numbers on the field, effected the escape of their brave remnant by passing again at speed through the intervals of the French columns, and making for the foot of the mountain, where the Spanish division of Bassecourt was in observation. Nevertheless, though these bold horsemen were overpowered, yet was their heroism rewarded; for the enemy desisted from their attempt to turn the British left. While these things were going forward, the hill had also been again attacked in front, but in vain.

The two French columns which assailed the English divisions in the centre, had a momentary success; for though they were at first resolutely met, and beaten back, yet the guards followed them too hastily, too far, and with too little order. The enemy saw this, faced about, and drove the guards in turn, pressing their exposed flank most sorely, while, at the same moment, the German legion was most roughly handled and gave ground. From the hill upon the left, sir Arthur had seen the loose advance of the guards, and he ordered down a regiment to their support. The 48th regiment, commanded by colonel Donellan, performed this service with that steadiness which is the triumph of discipline. The guards and Germans rallied like brave men. A brigade of cavalry was moved rapidly up from the second line, and came opportunely to their support. The British artillery played fast and fierce upon the enemy's flanks; and now, upon all sides, they drew off and gave up the battle. They had exhausted all their efforts. They had

made no impression on the British line of battle, and their slain lay spread along its gallant front in fearful numbers. Their retreat to their position was covered by their cannon, and conducted in good order. About six in the evening, the firing ceased; scarcely a dropping shot was to be heard; and the hostile armies lay each upon the ground which they had occupied in the morning. The loss of the British exceeded 6000 men, including those who fell in the combats of the 27th. The loss of the French was computed by themselves at 10,000, but others again reduce it below eight, and they left seventeen guns to the victorious English, taken at the point of the bayonet. The Spaniards returned 1200 killed and wounded, and such of them as were engaged behaved admirably. Two Spanish guns upon our left were excellently served. The two battalions which fought upon the right of Campbell's division did their duty with ardour; and, at the same point, one of their cavalry regiments charged with gallantry and success. But, nevertheless, the character and composition of the Spanish army, as a whole, and the weakness of the British, which was not only thinned by death, but faint with exhaustion from want of proper and sufficient food, and without any supply or means of transport for a forward movement, rendered pursuit impossible. The British passed the damp and chilly night upon the field, where they had fought, amid the dead and the dying. As many of the wounded as there had been time to remove were put into hospital in the convents of Talavera.

A melancholy scene was presented soon after

the close of the action. In one part of the field where the wounded lay thick, the dry grass took fire, and the flames spread with such fierce and terrific swiftness, that many of the brave men, who lay helpless, and wet in their own blood, perished by fire. On the following morning, the British army was joined by general Crawford's brigade, from Lisbon, consisting of those excellent regiments, the 43d, 52d, and 95th. They had accomplished sixty-two miles in twenty-six hours, in the hottest season of the year, burdened with their knapsacks and ammunition. It is well observed by colonel Napier, that "had the historian Gibbon known of such a march, he would have spared his sneer about the delicacy of modern soldiers." During the 29th, 30th, and 31st, the enemy disappeared.

There were not wanting cold men in England to deny that their countrymen who fought at Talavera had won a victory. The truth is, it was a very great and a very important victory. The future fate of the war hung upon the issue of that struggle. Sir Arthur Wellesley, on that great and memorable day, thinking calmly amid the thunder of the battle, saw on every side what was wanted, and where, and when; and superadding to the dauntless bravery of his men his own moral courage, he achieved a great success, and won at his sword's point the coronet which his king bestowed.

We have always regarded this action as one that saved the cause, and prolonged the struggle. The time gained by this severe blow against the French was the invaluable and precious consequence of the battle; but for it, Portugal would

have been invaded that year, and could not have been defended.

We must turn, however, to the consideration of those circumstances, which, by their unhappy and vexatious working, shadowed over for a time the glory of this success, and coloured the affairs of the Peninsula with a gloom which begat despondency in many bosoms. First, then, the battle of Talavera ably directed, bravely fought, and nobly won, was barren of immediate results favourable to our arms, and was, in fact, followed by much distress and perplexity. It is known, indeed, that the king was greatly alarmed for Madrid, and that Victor was greatly disturbed by the re-appearance of sir Robert Wilson at Escalona, who during the action had moved near to Cazalegas; but they were frightened with very little reason: the British could not pursue them. It was with great difficulty that sir Arthur could procure nourishment and assistance for his wounded; and, after all, scarce sufficient to support them.

On the 30th information was received by sir Arthur that 12,000 rations had been ordered for a French corps on the road from Alba de Tormes towards Bejar. This road traverses the mountains to Plasencia by the Puerto de Baños; a pass which sir Arthur had thought effectually secured before he advanced from Plasencia. But under actual circumstances the news was embatrassing; nevertheless, the general trusted that the troops in the Puerto might make some defence if the enemy actually advanced; and was not, indeed, without hope that the intelligence of his success against Victor and the

king might deter them from prosecuting their movement. Still he urged Cuesta to send a Spanish division of some strength to that point without loss of time. Cuesta refused, and proposed that sir Robert Wilson should march there; though he was sensible how very important was the presence of that officer at Escalona.

It was not till the morning of the 2d that sir Arthur could prevail with his obstinate ally to detach general Bassecourt with a division towards Baños. On that same day intelligence arrived that the enemy had entered Plasencia; and that the marquis de la Reyna, whose two battalions only consisted of 600 men, with twenty rounds of ammunition, had abandoned the pass of Baños without firing a shot; and had hastened on from Plasencia to Almaraz, announcing his intention to remove the bridge.

Cuesta now proposed to sir Arthur that half of the army should march to the rear to oppose the enemy, while the other half should maintain the post of Talavera. The general replied, that if by half the army he meant half of each army, to such an arrangement he could not consent; that he would either go or stay with the whole British army, but would not divide the force with which he had been entrusted.

On the 3d of August, therefore, sir Arthur marched from Talavera to Oropesa, intending to unite with Bassecourt's division, and to fight the enemy at Plasencia, whom he estimated at 15,000 men.

At five o'clock on the evening of this day he heard that the French had advanced from Plasencia to Na-

valmoral, and were between the allies and the bridge of Almaraz. An hour afterwards came letters from Cuesta, to say, that from intercepted despatches addressed to Soult, it appeared that marshal was at the head of a much larger force than sir Arthur imagined; that the French were again advancing in his front, and that he should break up from Talavera that evening, and march to join the British, that he might aid them in the approaching contest.

This sudden abandonment of the British hospitals exceedingly distressed sir Arthur Wellesley. He wrote instantly to entreat Cuesta to hold his ground till the morrow at all events, that the British wounded might if possible be removed; but Cuesta was already on his way.

The position of the allies was now perilous: on the one side were 30,000 French troops barring up the valley of the Tagus; on the other, no doubt, as soon as Cuesta's retreat was known, Victor would again press onwards; and, after allowing for his late losses, and for a corps of 12,000 detached to observe Venegas, he could still muster 25,000 combatants. A battle fought with these armies on two distinct days, and in two separate fields of action, might, indeed, bring deliverance; but to do so, both must be successful; for the loss of either would be immediate ruin, there being no retreat.

Now could any confidence have been placed in the Spanish troops, notwithstanding the exhaustion and fatigue of the British, this would doubtless have been the boldest course, and success would have proved a surpassing triumph; but for this there was need of steadier discipline and sterner

stuff than the Spanish camp could furnish. Accordingly, sir Arthur came to the resolution of passing the bridge of Arzobispo, and taking up a line of defence behind the Tagus, before the French could seize the Col de Mirabete, and cut off the road to Truxillo and Merida.

This plan Cuesta (who embodied in his own person all the obstinacy and contradiction which writers of comedy have imagined) as usual opposed, and vapoured about fighting at Oropesa. The British general told him that he might act as he judged best; but the British army should not be sacrificed: accordingly, orders were immediately issued for the march of the British. He led them across the Tagus by the bridge of Arzobispo on the 4th, and conducting them by Toralida and the Pass of Meza d'Ibor to Deleytosa, there halted them in a position favourable for the defence of the passage of Almaraz, and having a clear line of retreat to the frontier of Portugal.

By great exertions, and by the sacrifice of much baggage, sir Arthur Wellesley got together about forty cars; and with this aid about 2000 of the wounded were brought off from Talavera, while about 1500 of the worst cases, whom under no circumstances it would have been safe or humane to move, were left in the hospitals, and recommended to the care and the attention of the enemy.

Cuesta did not cross the river till the 5th; established himself with the main body at Peralada de Garben, and left a division of infantry at Arzobispo, together with all the cavalry of Albuquerque. Six thousand French horse and a brigade of infantry

forded the river about two o'clock in the day upon the 8th; and surprising these Spaniards took five pieces of artillery and about 400 prisoners, and drove away the whole force in very shameful confusion. The Spanish foot made for the mountains.

On the 11th the British head-quarters moved to Jaraicejo. Two divisions occupied Almaraz and the Puerto de Mirabete. The main body of the army was cantoned in the villages round the head-quarters; and the cavalry were sent for the sake of their horses to the city of Truxillo. At the same time the Spaniards established their head-quarters in Delcytosa, and occupied Meza d'Ibor and Campillo. Thus the allies had a good defensive line upon the Tagus: and holding as they did the impregnable passes of Meza d'Ibor and the Col de Mirabete, the mere power of passing the river gave the enemy no advantage whatever; for by these mountain barriers their movements must have been confined to the narrow space upon its banks.

At this time marshal Beresford with a considerable body of Portuguese troops was in position near Zarza Mayor; and general Catlin Crawford, with four British regiments, was in communication with the marshal from Castello Branco.

This general was prepared to arrest upon the frontier any French corps which should attempt a passage into Portugal. The confidence of Beresford and the quietness of the French in Plasencia, permitted sir Arthur Wellesley to repose without any anxiety in his present position.

Of the French corps from the north all that at

this time was accurately known was, that they occupied Plasencia in strength, sending patroles and foraging parties to the vicinity of Coria; and that a division had moved to the Puerto de Baños to intercept sir Robert Wilson. That officer, falling back from Escalona upon the British left, and being too late to retire on Arzobispo, had now penetrated to Baños, through the mountains by the pass of Tornavacas, and he awaited this attack. Being without artillery, and his force weak in numbers and exhausted by long and severe fatigues, he was defeated and driven from the pass by the French of Ney's corps, who afterwards continued their march to Salamanca.

Sir Robert Wilson had rendered himself most useful in the command of the Portuguese and Spaniards with which he had been detached throughout this campaign. Before the battle of Talavera he had pushed his parties almost to the gates of Madrid, and been in communication with that city. In fact, he would have entered Madrid, if it had not been necessary to recall him when the general engagement was expected. He was a zealous officer, well acquainted with the country in which he was acting, and possessing the confidence of the troops which he commanded.

Talavera was now again in the possession of Victor; and it is gratifying to record of him, that he treated the British wounded with great attention and humanity.

On the 12th of August Cuesta was recalled from the command of the Spanish army, and it devolved upon general Eguia. This was well pleasing to sir

Arthur; for a more obstinate, intractable, incapable old man than Cuesta could scarce be found. He never agreed to any thing without demurring, and to few things at all. He was never willing either to help the British wants himself, or to aid them with his authority while making their own exertions. He saw our wounded without transport; and though the Spanish army was encumbered with carts and conveyances, yet did he only furnish seven cars to their hospitals when they were in such necessity at Talavera. He thwarted sir Arthur Wellesley on every occasion; and refused those very favours which a soldier and a patriot should have felt himself honoured in bestowing: as, for example, when at Talavera sir Arthur applied to him for ninety artillery horses or mules to supply the place of those killed in the action, Cuesta, on the very field of victory, refused them; while at the same time whole trains of cumbrous cars, drawn by fine cattle, were in the Spanish camp. In fact, there never was a man less qualified than Cuesta to command an army; nor could one among all the Spanish leaders be found of a temper less suited to act in concert with an ally. Nevertheless, in parting from this crabbed veteran it should be added, there were about him redeeming qualities. He was brave, faithful, and true; he loved Spain; he hated her enemies; and, unhappily, his prejudices against all foreigners were so strong, that England and her officers came in for their share of his suspicion, jealousy, and mistrust. Moreover, he had the pride and wilfulness of age, and bristled up not only at every attempt to control his movements, but even

from the silken leading rein of persuasion he would start and break away.

We turn to Venegas:—his army, both before and after the battle of Talavera, was kept in a state of shameful inaction. Their part of the concerted movements against Madrid was never fulfilled. Venegas was perplexed by orders and advice of the most contradictory and irreconcilable nature; but, obeying the secret orders of the junta, he delayed his march, and changed its direction. On the 29th he was at Ocana, with his advance at Aranjuez; having a division under Lacy in front of Toledo, which was wasting powder and time in a useless and harmless cannonade with the garrison. His posts at Aranjuez were attacked by the enemy on the 5th of August, and successfully maintained. Venegas, after this, retired towards the Sierra Morena; but suddenly and most imprudently changing his purpose, he returned towards Toledo, and concentrated his army at Almonacid on the 10th, with the design of attacking the French upon the 12th: on the 11th, however, Sebastiani was already in front of his position, and became the assailant. The action lasted some hours; there was a great deal of sharp fighting; and many of the Spanish regiments, both foot and horse, behaved in a manner that merited success: but the discipline and the manœuvres of the warlike brigades of France did of course prevail. The moment came, when broken formations on the one side, and changes of direction on the other, required that the Spaniards should manœuvre as well as fight. Confusion of necessity ensued; the disorder could not be repaired; they

broke and dispersed; and again the sabres of French horsemen ran red with the blood of Spain. Sebastiani purchased this victory with the loss of 1500 good soldiers. That of Venegas amounted to 7000 slain and captured; and he led away his discomfited battalions to a position of strength and security in the Sierra Morena.

CHAP. XVI.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE CAMPAIGN OF TALAVERA. — THE RETREAT OF SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY TO THE FRONTIER OF PORTUGAL. — THE DISPATCH OF LORD WELLESLEY CONCERNING THIS MOVEMENT. — THE ARMY CANTONED NEAR THE GUADIANA. — THE SICKNESS OF THE TROOPS. — THE SPANIARDS BEATEN AT OCANA AND ALBA DE TORMES. — REMARKS UPON THEIR DISASTERS. — THE GUERRILLAS. — NOTICE OF LORD WELLINGTON'S MOVEMENTS. — THE ARMY BREAKS UP FROM THE GUADIANA.

HAD the army of Cuesta been in the state of efficiency represented to the English general, — had Cuesta been a cordial coadjutor, — had the supreme junta been single in their aim, zealous in their service, and wise in their arrangements, — and had Venegas been permitted to fulfil his part in the concerted operations against Madrid, at what period of the war was there so bright and so hopeful a prospect as that which shone out upon the columns of the British army when they marched back from the north of Portugal to the banks of the Tagus, to operate offensively against Victor? We say, that even a Fabius at that moment might have felt the advance prudent and of good promise; that there was all hope to march victoriously to the gates of Madrid. But we have seen, first, that the British leader was delayed at Abrantes for want of money in his military chest; next, that he found but a weak support in the troops of Cuesta, and in the

man himself a stumbling-block in the path of victory; again, that the supreme junta neutralised the power of Venegas; and, finally, they left the British army to starve amid toils and combats that demanded the incessant exercise of all the physical energy it possessed. Reverse the picture from what it was, and where would have been the danger upon sir Arthur's flank? and, if menaced, how strongly and effectually might the passes between Salamanca and the Tagus have been guarded. The men, who beat Soult at Oporto, and Victor, or the king, at Talavera, would have fought their road gaily to the capital: and if, under such circumstances, Soult had again invaded Portugal, a district of that land might perhaps have been traversed and laid desolate; but with a hostile and victorious army in the heart of Spain, with a fresh impulse and a fresh strength imparted to the Spanish people, the French could not have remained in Portugal, where all hearts were against them; moreover they would have been wanted elsewhere. Nay, even as matters actually fell out, could sir Arthur Wellesley have commanded two full days' rations for his men, he might, and probably he would, have advanced to the capital; and though Soult should have filled the valley of the Tagus with troops, as he did, the line of La Mancha would, at all events, have been open. But the want of provisions, and the want of transport, weighed down the wings of our British eagle, and he could not soar as he aspired to do. From the time when the Spanish and British armies joined, on the 22d of July, the English

had often no ration, but meat without salt, and flour or grain instead of bread; and even of it a most scanty portion, amounting only to the third, or at most the half, of a full ration. The horses seldom or never received a regular delivery of forage; and the cavalry had to pick up what they could, going for it to a great distance. As a consequence of these privations, the loss and the sickness of the English horses was so great, that in the middle of August the six cavalry regiments wanted one thousand horses to complete them; and the artillery had but few cattle, and those so feeble they could scarcely draw the guns.

As another consequence of the severe wants of the army, the officers and men (for all fared alike) fell sick in great numbers; and being without salt to season their tasteless food, and with no other drink than water, they were almost all affected with dysentery; meanwhile, nevertheless, they all lay out in the damp and dewy nights, and continued, in despite of their weakness, to perform all the duties required of them. In consideration of all these untoward circumstances, sir Arthur Wellesley resolved to retire towards the frontier of Portugal; and with that view he broke up from Jaraicejo, on the 20th of August, and marched upon Truxillo. In communicating this step to the ministers at home, the general further stated, that he had never been able to procure means of transport since his arrival in Spain; that he was obliged to employ the largest proportion of the carts of the army, whether they carried money or ammunition, to convey the wounded soldiers to the hospital at Elvas: that he

was obliged to lay down a quantity of ammunition at Meza d'Ibor and Deleytosa, which was delivered to the Spanish general; that the few carts remaining with the army were required to move the sick he then had; that he had been obliged to leave behind him his reserve ammunition, which he had likewise given to the Spanish troops; and that if he had waited longer, he could not have moved at all without leaving his sick behind: but he observed, that from the dispersed state of the French armies, and the losses they had sustained, the Spanish troops were not likely to suffer any inconvenience from the absence of their allies; and that upon the frontier of Portugal he hoped to supply his distressed soldiers with every thing they might want.

The corps of the enemy which had been engaged in the late operations were at this moment distributed as follows: Victor held Talavera, and had troops in La Mancha; Sebastiani was in La Mancha; Mortier occupied Oropesa, Arzobispo, and Naval Moral; the head quarters of Soult were at Placentia; those of Ney at Salamanca. From this distribution of the enemy's force, sir Arthur inferred that it was obvious they did not intend at that time to undertake any offensive operations. Soult, indeed, had projected the invasion of Portugal from Placentia, desiring that Ney should assist in this expedition, by advancing from Salamanca with the same object. This plan of operations he proposed to the king; but Joseph, guided by the judgment of marshal Jourdan, rejected this proposal. Indeed, the prudence of it was very questionable, and Ney, an officer of great expe-

rience, strongly discouraged it. The truth is, a straightforward, unobstructed march upon Lisbon was not feasible. Inefficient as was the Portuguese army under marshal Beresford, it would have rendered good service among the mountains of Beira. The heart of the whole nation was against the invader; and his corps would have been followed by the British army. This plan being rejected, Soult proposed that at all events Ciudad Rodrigo should be immediately besieged; but this project, though undeniably a wise measure, obtained no better reception at the French head-quarters, where it was already resolved to defer the invasion of Portugal till the spring of the following year; and to employ their disposable force that autumn and winter in subjugating the south of Spain. Sir Arthur Wellesley had it in view at first, after passing south of the Tagus, to act against the French at Placentia, for which purpose he had ordered materials to be collected for repairing the bridge called Puente de Cardinal. But when he abandoned the idea of any such movement, he sent a detachment to break down another arch of the Cardinal's Bridge, that no moveable column of the enemy might disturb him.

We should have before noticed, that the central junta expressed its sense of sir Arthur Wellesley's services, by appointing him a captain-general in the Spanish service, and presenting him with six Andalusian horses in the name of king Ferdinand. He accepted the horses and the appointment also, (submitting this acceptance to the pleasure of the king of England,) but with a becoming disinter-

estedness, and a consideration for the finances of Spain, he declined the pay attached to the rank which was conferred on him. In England, as soon as the news of the victory arrived, he was raised to the peerage by the titles of baron Douro of Wellesley, and viscount Wellington of Talavera and of Wellington in the county of Somerset.

A few days after the battle of Talavera, marquis Wellesley landed at Cadiz to supersede Mr. Frere. The reception of the marquis, both at Cadiz and Seville, was very flattering; and manifested most clearly their warm attachment and real gratitude to the British nation. But, while charmed with the people, he soon discovered the incapacity, the meanness, and the intriguing spirit of the junta. As soon as he was in communication with sir Arthur, and was made acquainted with the state of matters in the field, he seconded the remonstrances of the British general with all the weight of his station and his talents. His efforts were vain: the government was, indeed, lavish of promises, and sent Don Lorenzo Calvo, a member of their own body, to arrange for the supply of both the armies; but the English army was in no respect better supplied, and remained without either sufficient or wholesome sustenance till sir Arthur Wellesley broke up from Jaraicejo, and commenced his retreat. Sir Arthur Wellesley halted at Merida; and he here received a despatch from the marquis Wellesley, some paragraphs of which I transcribe.

"Although M. de Garay and his government must have been prepared to expect the early notification of your return to Portugal, from every

communication which I had made since my arrival at Seville, and especially from your recent despatches (which I had regularly put into M. de Garay's hands), the most violent emotions of alarm and consternation seemed to be excited by the near approach of an event so long foreseen.

"I am aware that the absolute necessity of the case is the sole cause of a movement so entirely contrary to your inclination.

"I am also fully sensible not only of the indelicacy, but of the inutility of attempting to offer to you any opinion of mine, in a situation where your own judgment must be your best guide; and where no useful suggestions could arise in my mind, which must not already have been anticipated by your own experience, comprehensive knowledge, and ardent zeal for the public welfare.

"Viewing, however, so nearly the painful consequences of your immediate retreat into Portugal, I have deemed it to be my duty to submit to your consideration the possibility of adopting an intermediate plan, which might combine some of the advantages of your return into Portugal, without occasioning alarm in Spain, and without endangering the foundations of the alliance between this country and Great Britain.

"But it would be vain to urge these considerations beyond the extent in which they may be approved by your judgment. It will be sufficient for me to receive an early intimation of your opinion, and to be enabled to state it distinctly to this government, which looks to your decision on the present occasion as the final determination of its fate, and of the

existence of the Spanish nation. That decision I am persuaded will be founded on the same principles of wisdom justice, and public spirit, which have already obtained the respect, esteem, and confidence of the Spanish nation; and it will be my duty to endeavour to satisfy this government (whatever may be the exigency of the crisis) that no change has taken place in the sentiments or motives of action which have so cordially engaged their affection and admiration."

We have quoted these copious extracts from the despatch of the marquis Wellesley, and placed them in the body of this memoir, because they show what was the true and deliberate estimation of the value of British aid, both with the government and the people of Spain; and because they show (after the fullest allowance for all the dignified courtesies of expression which abound in diplomatic correspondence) how great was the reverence and respect with which the marquis Wellesley regarded the character of his brother; how entirely he deferred to his military judgment; and how persuaded he was of the plain immovable decision with which that judgment would be formed, and carried out into action. The plan suggested by the marquis Wellesley was, that the British and Spanish armies should take up a defensive position on the left bank of the Guadiana; thus covering the Alentejo and defending Seville. To this lord Wellington objected; for the line of the Guadiana was weak, the river fordable in many places, and the ground on its banks afforded no position which could possibly have been held by the Spanish troops against the French.

The Spaniards, indeed, could not be better placed at the moment than they were: in fact, by occupying, as they did, the strong line of the Tagus, and remaining on the defensive at Deleytosa and Almaraz, they effectually covered the Guadiana, and that, too, in a position almost impregnable. As a measure of increased precaution, lord Wellington advised them to take up the bridge at Almaraz, and send the pontoon to Badajos. To this last place he marched himself in the beginning of September, and there established his head-quarters.

It is hardly to be believed, that at this time the supreme junta were not urging a renewal of offensive operations, to be undertaken by the British and Spanish forces united; the English general, however, had determined to cooperate with the undisciplined levies of Spain no longer. Nevertheless, he did consent to remain for a time upon the Spanish territory; and accordingly he cantoned the greater part of his force in the towns and villages of Estremadura, contiguous to the frontier of Portugal.

Upon the march from Jaraicejo to Badajos, lord Wellington was for two days so unwell that he was obliged to travel in a carriage; but he battled with the malady, and shook it off. In the cantonments now occupied by the British troops they had both rest and food; but there came upon them an enemy more terrible and resistless than any human foe — fiery fever and chill ague stole upon the gallant bands who had upheld the glory of England on the bloody field of Talavera. In a few weeks many thousand men were in hospital, in a few more some thousands were in the grave. In one of

these autumnal months the deaths were 700, in another 1300; and brave young men, in the very prime and heyday of their lives, moaned their last in pains that tired, and shiverings that humbled them. The fever generally assumed the intermitting form. This domestic terror always appears in Estremadura during the autumnal season, and its dreaded visit has passed into a proverb.* Unhappily wine and spirits could not be procured in sufficient quantities to make regular issues to the army. The hospitals, indeed, were supplied, but even here there was a great lack of medical officers; and such was the scarcity of bark, that in the regimental hospitals many perished for the want of it. During his stay at Badajos, lord Wellington himself had a slight attack of the intermittent, and Cæsar (despite his will) trembled; but to the joy of all the fever soon left him. It was remarkable, but in some degree comforting, that while the sick in the general hospital at Elvas were dying every day in fearful numbers, the wounded were all doing well, and recovered fast.

At this period nothing could be more gloomy than the anticipations generally indulged in by the officers of the army; especially by those who had been present through the campaign of Talavera, and had witnessed the lamentable inefficiency of all Spanish cooperation. It was commonly expected by the many that the British troops would evacuate the Peninsula within six months. Amid all these trials and discouragements, lord Wellington never for one moment admitted into his bosom any feeling

* "In mesa de Setiembre
Toda la Estremadura tiemble."

of despondency: confident that, in spite of all the disasters in Spain, he could make good the defence of Portugal, he directed all the powers of his mind, and all the resources of his genius, to that one object; and how his noble constancy was rewarded the events of the next campaign will show.

We would here remark, that lord Wellington, whose opinions concerning the Spanish government and the Spanish armies had been faithfully and firmly given in the able and interesting correspondence between himself and the marquis Wellesley, had here the opportunity of seeing, as indeed might have been seen any where throughout the land, that the people of Spain were true to themselves. The Estremadurans were most violent and loud against the supreme junta; they suspected and accused them of treachery by the very placards * on the walls of Badajos: they acknowledged that the British commander had been most justly disgusted with their government. Nevertheless, with the wavering caprice of an unhappy nation, tossed to and fro by those buffets of misfortune which, in the defeat and dispersion of those armies where her sons were bleeding, they continually received, after the fatal

* Among others appeared this: —

Paz entre la Francia
Y la Junta Central:
Articulos.
El Tajo abandonado,
El Ingles disgutado,
El exercito perdito,
Y Badajos vendito.

days of Ocana and Alba de Tormes, they again railed at the English; began to tire of their presence, and to ask, with an angry and an ignorant insolence, why the British stayed in the rear? why they remained upon the soil of Spain at all, suffering Spaniards *to fight their battles?* Miserably, indeed, would those battles have been fought, if the contest had been committed to Spanish generals and Spanish armies. With a strange infatuation and with a blind temerity, the junta once more resolved to act upon the offensive in La Mancha. They appointed Areizaga to command a force of 50,000 men, placing Albuquerque, who had nine or ten thousand men in Estremadura, under the orders of this incapable and inexperienced young man. By this arrangement they overlooked Castaños, Romana, and Albuquerque, three of the best officers they had. No doubt, however, under these, if the junta had commanded a general action, the army would have equally sustained defeat; but by their better talents it would have been preserved from the signal discomfiture and utter ruin which ensued. On the 3d of November, Areizaga, at the head of 43,000 infantry, 6600 horse, and sixty pieces of artillery, advanced from the Sierra Morena into the plains of La Mancha. He drew up and offered battle at Ocana, in one of the most open positions he could have chosen. He placed a wing of his army on each side of the town; stationed his second line close to his first; arrayed his cavalry in four lines upon his right, and put his guns in battery upon his two flanks.

Thus situated he was attacked by two French corps. Mortier commanded them, with Sebastiani

for a second. Need the consequence be told? The Spaniards were routed with an immense loss in prisoners, and four thousand slain. Only fifteen of their guns were saved. The Spanish artillery had been well served in this action, and some battalions fought very bravely; but in vain. A regiment of guards and a regiment of Seville left the greater part of their officers and men upon the field.

The defeat of the Spanish army of La Mancha was followed by the discomfiture of that under the duke Del Parque. This nobleman had obtained a very creditable success against a considerable French corps under Marchand, on the 18th of October, at Tamames. His position was a very strong one, and was very stoutly defended. The French were there repulsed with a loss of near three thousand men. Emboldened by this achievement, the duke ventured down into the open country of Castile, and, after some rash and foolish movements, was forced by Kellerman to fight a battle at Alba de Tormes. In this action the Spanish cavalry fled before the French dragoons without raising a sword; and the right flank of the foot being thus uncovered, was charged, and, after a short but ineffectual resistance, broken. The Spanish infantry on the left three times repulsed the French horse, and retired under cover of the night in good order; but, in the morning, the very same men, finding a small party of the enemy's cavalry in their rear, were stricken with a sudden panic, and dispersed, throwing away their arms and knapsacks; and this too in sight of Tamames, where a month before they had fought so well. The Spaniards lost five thousand killed and taken,

and all the artillery of their right wing. In recording an action so disgraceful as this, we can only say, that the Spanish soldiers had no confidence in themselves when they were arrayed for battle against the French troops in an open country. It has been acutely observed by the historian Napier, in speaking of the French under Soult, and their weariness and discontent, that "the mind shrinks from perpetual contact with death."* Now, if this be true, as it is with all troops too often led against an enemy, although they should be always victorious, in how great a measure will it be found so in men familiar only with defeat; formed only to be broken, fighting only to be slain? For so it was: and let it be remembered, that death in the onward path is not invested with any of those terrors with which it meets its miserable victim

"In the lost battle borne down by the flying."

Napoleon well knew what he was about when he supplied the French generals in Spain with such large and seemingly disproportionate numbers of cavalry. Before the trampling of his numerous and

* We well remember hearing a brave officer of a very distinguished British regiment observe, upon an occasion where the corps had behaved nobly, and, as usual, sustained a heavy loss, — "It is almost time that our old hands should be sent home; they have had too much of this: they were as steady as usual, but not in such good humour as the men who last came out; a few more such victories would sicken them." We speak from memory, and at a distance of nearly nineteen years; but a more zealous and a more gallant officer than he who made the observation could not have been found among British grenadiers.

warlike squadrons, the hearts of the Spanish soldiers, who had no confidence in their own discipline, no power of formation and movement, and for a long time no officers capable of instructing them, too often became fear-broken; and the glittering of French sabres was like the gleam of the axe and the signal of execution.

The frequent and melancholy experience of their inefficiency in regular warfare drove numbers of the dispersed, but not disheartened, patriots to adopt a new mode of hostilities, which harassed and distressed the French to an incredible degree.

They collected in small bands; they chose leaders of a ready intelligence and a daring courage; and they commenced a system of war in detail, which gratified their thirst for the invaders' blood, and suited well with their melancholy fortunes. The French had never found any difficulty in defeating the Spanish armies * — "troops," says a French officer, "hastily raised, without skill to manœuvre, and embarrassed by the very numbers which should have been their strength."

But now they were engaged with the nation;—

* We deny that they ever had an army, though we use the word; they had levies of armed men, but no armies. "*What the Spaniards call armies,*" is the expression of sir John Moore; and the duke of Albuquerque, speaking of the army of Cuesta, says, "On our marches we stop to repose like a flock of sheep, without taking up any position; and again, we march as if it were on a pilgrimage, without any regard to distance, order, or method." Although these remarks of the duke's apply to the incompetency of Cuesta, they picture faithfully the marches of Spanish armies.

they stood side by side in the market-places with men who were marking them for a prey. The peasant was seen ploughing peaceably in his field; but in one of the furrows lay his long Spanish gun, ready to give aid in any chance contest between the partidas, or guerrillas, and the passing detachments of the enemy. Not a mountain pass in the romantic land but there lay among the rocks and bushes a group of these fierce and formidable men, awaiting the expected convoy or the feeble company. Even in the plains the posts of correspondence were compelled to fortify a belfry, or tower, or house; and the sentinel kept his vigilant look-out from a scaffolding of planks, that he might see all that passed in the fields around; nor could any of the soldiers venture beyond the enclosure thus fortified for fear of assassination. To lead these guerrilla bands, the priest girded up his black robe, and stuck pistols in his belt —the student threw aside his books, and grasped a sword — the shepherd forsook his flock — the husbandman his home.—

One of the most celebrated of the guerrilla chiefs thus simply tells the commencement of his military life:—

"I was born at Idozin, a village of Navarre, on the 17th of June, 1781. My parents were John Stephen Espoz y Mina, and Mary Terese, Ilundain y Ardaiz, honest farmers of that province.

"As soon as I had learned to read and write I devoted myself to the labours of husbandry; and when my father died I took charge of the little farm, which constituted the patrimony of my family. In this manner I lived till the age of twenty-six years.

" My patriotism being then excited by the treacherous invasion of Spain by Napoleon in 1808, *after having done all the harm I could to the French in my own village*, I abandoned it, and enlisted as a *soldier* in Doyle's battalion, on the 8th of February, 1809.

" Having joined, a short time after, the guerrilla commanded by my nephew Xavier Mina, I continued still as a private *soldier*, when this guerrilla being disbanded, in consequence of the capture of my nephew, *seven of the men named me their chief, and with them I began to command.*"

Such was the origin of this famous guerrilla chief, and such his first rank and service. Similar was the origin and service of many others, who never rose to the distinction obtained by this brave, enterprising, and fortunate individual.

The number of these armed bands was very great, and some few of the self-elected chiefs, or of those chosen by smugglers and robbers to be their leaders, became a terror to the villages which they visited, and committed great oppression, plundering friends as well as enemies: but even these were keen after the invaders' blood;—while the good and true patriots, who were led by good and true men, met on all sides assistance and encouragement, and were in constant communication with the inhabitants of every town and village in which the French troops were cantoned.

The stratagems of the leaders of these bands were infinitely varied; and the very nature of their service, demanding at one moment the greatest secrecy and address, and admitting at another a

display of heroic energy, had about it a wild charm that fascinated all gallant and enterprising spirits.

The principal chieftains of these partidas, were the two Minas and Renovales, in Navarre and Arragon; Porlier, named the *Marquisetto*, and Longa, in the Asturias and Biscay; Juan Martin, or *El Empecinado*, in New Castile; Juan Paladea, or *El Medico*, in La Mancha; the curate Merino and others in Castile; the friar Sapia, of Soria; Juan Abril, of Segovia; the doctor Rovera, in Catalonia; and Julian Sanchez in the neighbourhood of Salamanca; and a long list of names of lesser note, well known in the vicinity of those places where they acted against the enemy. There were not less than fifty thousand of these irregular combatants in Spain at one period of the war, and many of them were actuated by very noble motives and the true love of their country. It were a waste of words to insist upon the injury which these parties inflicted on the French armies, or upon the very material advantage derived by Spain, by Portugal, and by the British army, from their active and persevering exertions. We know that in an after-period of the war, lord Wellington himself appreciated their important services most highly.

We may here observe that some of the British wounded, taken in the hospitals at Talavera, effected their escape in the autumn, and found their way back to the British cantonments, being fed and assisted on their route by the inhabitants of the country. It is true, we know it is true, that the people of Talavera, and of many other places, hoarded up their grain, and would not produce it, either for the British *or the*

Spanish armies. They had become selfish from hard necessity. The owners of the grain feared the loss of their store without any remuneration; and the poor of the towns and villages, dreading scarcity and want, would not divulge the secret of the existence of such stores, or of the places of deposit. "My children cannot eat gold," was the reply of a peasant upon one occasion of great scarcity in Spain, when an officer, in a hunger he could scarcely endure, offered a doubloon for a loaf of bread. It was the invariable custom of the Spaniards during the war to bake by stealth; and the good wives would move about their dwellings, while the important business was going on, as if they were engaged in some guilty matter and feared detection.

Lord Wellington went to Lisbon on the 8th of October, and returned to Badajoz at the end of the month. Important was the object of this visit: it was upon this occasion that he made a personal *reconnoissance* of the country in front of Lisbon, and resolved upon the construction of those famous lines of Torres Vedras, which enabled him to stay the tide of French invasion, and triumph over a numerous and formidable host with forces very inadequate to the deadly struggle of the field. Of this intention nothing was said, nothing whispered, at the time. He returned to his head-quarters full of spirit and animation; and upon the 1st of November he again quitted Badajoz and rode to Seville. About the middle of the month he again appeared at head-quarters, having, during his absence, accompanied lord Wellesley to Cadiz, on the embarkation of that nobleman for England. Things now began to look

better: there were supplies in abundance; clothing had come up for the British regiments, of which they stood in the greatest need; the weather became cold and frosty; and, although the hospitals were full, from the cantonments the intermittent fever now disappeared, and the men at their duty enjoyed good health. Lord Wellington was much occupied in his bureau, and for the sake of health, and diversion of the mind, went out daily with his fowling-piece upon the plains. He had one day of princely sport in the royal park of Villa Viçiosa, a hunting-palace of the kings of Portugal. Upon this occasion one wild boar and twenty-five head of deer were heaped upon the sward as the trophy of the day. He was always gay and good-humoured with those about him, and inspiring others with the confidence which he evidently felt himself.

Upon the 15th of December he broke up from his cantonments on the Guadiana, and led his army (with the exception of Hill's corps, which was left to observe the Alentejo,) to the neighbourhood of the Coa. The preparations of the French for the invasion of Portugal had now assumed an intelligible character; and Ciudad Rodrigo, a Spanish fortress immediately upon the frontier, and not very distant from Almeida, was already menaced. While his columns were crossing the Tagus, and pursuing their march to the new line of cantonments appointed for them, lord Wellington again visited Lisbon. He now made another *reconnoissance* of the positions near that capital, and gave his final orders for the works to be erected. He again rode over the range of hills to select his line of defence.

He fixed the principal points, marked the great outline, and leaving the detail and execution of this great work to lieutenant-colonel Fletcher, an able and meritorious officer worthy of all confidence, he rejoined his army, and established his head-quarters at Vizeu.

CHAP. XVII.

LORD WELLINGTON IS APPOINTED MARSHAL-GENERAL OF THE LUSITANIAN FORCES. — PROGRESS OF THE WAR IN SPAIN. — OPINIONS IN ENGLAND CONCERNING THE DEFENCE OF PORTUGAL. — POSITION OF THE ALLIES. — CONDUCT OF LORD WELLINGTON. — ASSEMBLY OF THE ARMY OF INVASION UNDER MASSENA.

By a royal decree published at Lisbon on the 23d of November, 1809, and dated at Rio Janeiro in the July preceding, lord Wellington was appointed marshal-general of the forces of Portugal. The regency were commanded to invite him to all their sittings, and to consult with him on all projected measures of importance. This appointment invested lord Wellington with an authority in all military affairs *supreme;* and gave him a voice in all civil arrangements and financial regulations, which could not be heard without attention and respect. Already it was well and widely known in Portugal, that they had to do with a nobleman of liberal disinterested views, and of a straightforward integrity. This wise confidence of the court of Portugal was bestowed upon one who felt the honour and the value of so great a trust: nor can there be one individual found in that country to stand forward and say, that the power and influence which it gave was in any instance abused.

It is a great pleasure to know that we write the memoir of a general, who, although his commands have

been many and considerable, and the theatre of his services has been often varied, was never yet charged with one act of rapacity or of cruelty; that we find no stain of severity upon his hand, no dirt of plunder adhering to his honourable sword, no tears of desolated provinces to dim the lustre of his laurels.

With a calm and cheerful resolution lord Wellington took upon himself the heavy charge and the high responsibility of defending this little kingdom against the most formidable military power in Europe; and secure in the bravery of his few but faithful Britons, and in the willing devotion of the Portuguese soldiery, he looked onwards to the impending struggle without dismay. He enjoyed the confidence of the council, of the army, of the people of Portugal. Whatever suggestions he offered were cordially adopted; and the absence of the court (though friendly) kept at a distance all those low jealousies and petty intrigues which might otherwise have thwarted and perplexed him.

The men of the Portuguese army rapidly improved in appearance and discipline, and gave good promise of efficient aid in the approaching contest. But there was one branch of that army full of evil, stubborn, and intractable; its commissariat was inefficient for the troops, and oppressive to the people. Here reformation was opposed by all the cunning and intrigue to which self-interest and avarice so eagerly resort. There is no canker which does so surely eat out the heart of patriotic exertions as the sin of covetousness: by this the success in Spain was ever much impeded; and by

this the difficulty of the defensive war in Portugal was greatly increased: but by the close and earnest attention of lord Wellington, many abuses were swept away, and others diminished.

The exertions of marshal Beresford were indefatigable; and certainly it was no light labour to reform an army so long and so shamefully neglected. Cleanliness, regularity, attendance at all drills and parades, and prompt obedience to all orders, were rigidly enforced both upon officers and men. Equal justice was administered to the private soldier; and the fidalgo officer was taught to respect the rights, the character, and the person of the meanest peasant in the camp. Thus the dirty, indolent, and slovenly soldiers of the weakest and most perverted government in Europe soon learned that respect for themselves which drew all fear out of their hearts, and enabled them to contemplate the war, not only without alarm, but with the hope of victory.

It is a difficult task to reform and correct abuses, without exciting ill-will in the breasts of many; and, thankful to marshal Beresford for what he did, we must not complain unreasonably concerning that which he failed to do. It was his aim to inspire awe into all beneath him. The wisdom of this aim we question; it frightened only his worst officers, and discontented many of his best. His manners were harsh and unpopular, and formed a great contrast to the patient good-humour and quietness of lord Wellington.

The British head-quarters were established at Vizeu, on the 12th of January, 1810; and the divisions of the army were so disposed as to hold the

strong and rugged line of the Beira frontier, while at the same time they were distributed in cantonments where their health, equipment, and discipline might be carefully improved. We turn for a few pages to look upon the affairs of Spain. When, after the battle of Valls and the death of Reding, Blake was appointed commander in chief of Catalonia, Valencia, and Arragon, his first operations at Monzon and Alcaniz were successful.

Encouraged by the smile of fortune, he projected the recovery of Saragossa; and he marched against the corps of marshal Suchet, which lay near that famous city. Blake was so unskilful in the plan of his attack, and so slow in his formations, that Suchet anticipated him and struck the first blow: nevertheless Blake defended himself well, and repulsed the assault upon his left wing with firmness; but the marshal making fresh dispositions, attacked him in turn with great vigour and overthrew the Spaniards with slaughter, taking from them guns and colours, and driving them away in disorder. Blake rallied his troops the next day; and upon the 18th of June drew up on a range of hills near Belchite, and offered battle. Suchet attacked him here with twenty-two battalions and seven squadrons; but, to the bitter mortification of Blake, his men, with the defeat of the 14th sticking in their minds, broke at the very commencement of the action, and fled. His artillery was taken, and in the pursuit the French made 4000 prisoners.

We find consolation for this in contemplating the glorious defence of Gerona; that heroic city sustained a siege of six months with unshaken constancy. Don Mariano Alvarez, a veteran of noble

character, was the governor of this fortress. From the middle of September to the day of the capitulation, which was finally agreed to on December the 10th, three wide breaches in its battered walls lay constantly open to the assailing columns. When first practicable, they were twice fiercely stormed, and fearlessly defended; the enemy was repulsed with so severe a loss, and so greatly discouraged, that the French officers judged it unwise to renew the attempt, and it was resolved to reduce the brave defenders by famine. Now came the dread trial of enduring courage. The garrison and the citizens fed hard and scantily;—they ate the flesh of horses and mules, and handfuls of unground corn, which they pounded between stones. Fever and flux soon appeared among them; and they sickened, and wasted, and died in great numbers. The way to the burial-place was never vacant, and the deaths averaged from thirty to forty daily. Amid all this disease and weakness they had no rest; for the bombardment was continued day and night, and ever in the night with great violence. There was scarcely a building which had not been injured; the houses lay in ruins, and the people slept in vaults and cellars, or made them holes and caves amid the rubbish; the very wounded were killed as they lay in hospital: still they not only held these breaches, which had been open for weeks without repair, but they made a sally to relieve the only two remaining outposts; and they effected their object in so sudden and resolute a manner that they only lost forty men. This was their last exertion. The sickness increased so dreadfully, that the deaths in one day sometimes amounted to

seventy. On the 4th of December Alvarez, the governor, was seized with a nervous fever, and in a few days became delirious and incapable of command. A council was now held of the two juntas, military and civil, and they deputed Don Blas de Furnas, a distinguished soldier, to treat for a capitulation. The most honourable terms were freely accorded by marshal Augereau, in a spirit that does infinite credit to his memory. The whole of the 10th was employed in adjusting the terms; and while this was going on, the French soldiers ran eagerly to the walls with provisions and wine for the brave men who had so long and so firmly opposed them. Humanities like these redeem the character of the imperial army; and we forget willingly for a season, that they were the instruments of the most insatiable and merciless ambition which ever cursed the world.

The emaciated garrison marched out with the honours of war; and as the decorated victors of Austerlitz looked upon the pale and patriot band, they might well have envied them the greater glory of that mournful triumph. Mariano Alvarez was led away in his captivity to Figueras, where soon after he died; but his name will live till old Gerona be a heap, and Spain a solitude.

We pass from Catalonia to the centre and south of Spain. Marshal Soult had in the previous October been appointed major-general and chief of the staff to king Joseph, in the place of Jourdan, who was recalled to Paris. This appointment gave activity and union to all the French operations; and some

of the successes which immediately ensued have already been told.

The central junta after the rout of Ocana exhibited no energy, and were unwilling to contemplate the coming dangers, because they had no abilities to meet them. They had lost the confidence and respect of the nation: they made an effort to recover their ground by offering to Romana, who had exposed their incapacity and disclaimed their authority, the command of Areizagas's broken army; this offer he declined. There was no reasonable prospect of defending the Sierra Morena with such a mob of undisciplined fugitives. Such little hope as remained to them rested on 12,000 men in Estremadura, commanded by the brave and zealous duke del Albuquerque; but of him they were jealous, and they looked upon all sides with doubt and hesitation.

They now announced their intention of removing from Seville to the Isle of Leon; a resolution which immediately excited loud murmurs among the people. The citizens saw they were to be abandoned; and, though certainly most unequal to the task, there was a mad desire to defend Seville. Meanwhile the king, at the head of three French corps directed by the able Soult, was marching upon Andalusia. They passed the Sierra Morena, encountering but little resistance; and upon the 21st of January their head-quarters were established at Baylen, the very place where the troops of Dupont at the commencement of the struggle had laid down their arms in dejection and disgrace.

It was in vain that the junta tried to hold out

false hopes to the people; it was in vain they admonished them to be calm,—all was in confusion; and the extinction of the power of this weakest and most unfortunate of councils was at hand. They were completely at a loss how to act; they sent instructions to Albuquerque at one moment which by the next courier they contradicted. These orders directed him to march on Cordova; an arrangement so foolish that it could scarcely be referred to treachery. The French had already passed the Sierra Morena; Albuquerque therefore, with a wise and prompt decision, led his division direct upon Cadiz; and thus was a city saved, the security of which was of the last importance to the future conduct of the war.

When Victor arrived from Seville he found Albuquerque with 8000 men already in the Isle of Leon, and the approaches guarded. The rest of Andalusia was speedily overrun. Seville was for a time the head-quarters of the intruder. French horsemen rode in at the gates of Jaen unresisted; French trumpets sounded their proud notes in the startled halls of Grenada; and, after a few useless shots in their defence, Malaga yielded up the cellars of her famous wine to the armed purveyors of king Joseph.

The unpopularity of the supreme junta had reached its height before they left Seville. While they were hastening their departure for Cadiz, the people of Seville had risen in tumult and deposed them; and when they arrived in Cadiz and discovered the strength of the public feeling against them, they formally resigned; but they did so with

a becoming and deliberate dignity. They nominated a regency, and transferred to it their authority, making provision that it should be only retained till the cortes were assembled. After this they published a farewell address to the people, in which they set forth all their exertions, vindicated their measures, and maintained their faithfulness in duty and their purity in intention. It must be freely admitted, that they had a task which might have proved too arduous for any statesmen upon earth. The government of a fierce, haughty, suspicious people, united indeed in one sentiment, viz., hatred to the invader; but, upon most questions which arose, separated into as many factions as there were provinces; consulting only interests that were local; moved only by dangers that were near; having no *system* in any thing; and averse from the introduction of any regulations that were *new*, however rational and useful. Neither was it in all the hurry and agitation of a present warfare that these evils could possibly be corrected. Neither was there one single master-mind to which the nation could look as to a beacon; nor one beloved person, dear to their hearts, round whom their affections could cling. Therefore it was, that each province and each army had attachments and prejudices distinct, and to be reconciled for the general good by no man, or council of men, to be found in all Spain.

They were a people disturbed and broken in upon by war and all its train of troubles; and not a town or village in the kingdom but found all its petty authorities placed in situations so new, and exacting services and duties so strange to them, that, but for

the melancholy consequences of their inexperience, and their unteachable obstinacy, if Spain hath, in any nook or corner of her land, a Cervantes living, he would find as rich materials for his pen in that period as she once furnished to that great master of the smile, and a moral to the full as mournful as he gave.

In their choice of the regents the junta selected the very fittest persons, a tacit proof of their own integrity; but many of their own body, after its dissolution, were persecuted with great rigour and cruel indignity, not by the regency, but by the junta of Cadiz and the people.

In the dangers now imminent that city looked anxiously to England: supplies of all sorts were most liberally furnished from Gibraltar; and there being no longer any objection to receive British troops in garrison, a division of 6000 men, including a contingent furnished by Portugal, were landed upon the Isla de Leon, and lieutenant-general Graham was sent from England to command at that important station. But such notice of their operations as may be required to illustrate this memoir we will take in another place, and return at present to Portugal.

It is interesting to enquire, while so many and so great anxieties were pressing upon the mind of lord Wellington, how far he was strengthened from home by the support of the ministry, and how far he was encouraged by the voice of his countrymen. A more animating spectacle can scarcely be contemplated by a nation alive to its glory than that of its chosen champion girding up his loins upon the ap-

pointed arena, and standing strong and steady to meet the enemy of his native land, and to maintain the cause of a weak and trembling ally. But what was the fact? In the British senate speeches were made and printed, with the double view, one should imagine, of encouraging the French and depressing the British armies.

Our extracts shall be few, but they bring out the character of lord Wellington into bold relief, and will fix in the mind a right estimate of his talent and of his courage.

"It was mournful and alarming," observed one gentleman, "to hear that lord Wellington had said he could defend Portugal with 50,000 men, provided 30,000 were British; for, if the French were in earnest in their designs upon that country, before three months lord Wellington and his army would be in England."

In a memorable debate in the house of lords a great and gifted nobleman, upon whose opinions able men have always set a high value, after remonstrating against the useless defence of Portugal, broke out with the following interrogatory: — "Was there any man that heard him, who in his conscience believed that even the sacrifice of the whole of that brave British army would secure the kingdom of Portugal?" — "If," said he, "I receive from any person an answer in the affirmative, *I shall be able to judge by that answer of the capacity of such a person for the government of this country, or even for the transaction of public business in a deliberative assembly.*" — Next came an earl, who was a general, or rather a soldier, and a brave one, but luckily not the

commander of our army in Portugal. He said, that "this attempt to defend Portugal was the *climax of error;* that we should be *allowed* to retain Portugal under our present system *just so long as Bonaparte thought proper.*"

In fact, the counsel of the despondent party, both in the houses of parliament and among the people of England, was this:—"Break your faith; desert the Spaniards; desert the Portuguese; have nothing to do with these terrible legions of Napoleon, you can neither resist them nor him; bring the army back; and, unless the French come to the shores of old England to look for it, let it never fire another shot." It was melancholy to see how many fine minds, how many excellent hearts, were blinded and deceived, and bowed down before the very name of Napoleon. Not even the consciousness that they were reading only a splendid and fabulous narration prevented their thrilling admiration of his bulletins. Neither did the coarseness of his tyranny in one country, nor the meanness of his policy towards another, awaken them to his true character. While the mothers of France, bereaved of their sons, *of all their sons,* sate lonely in their homes, and cursed him; while every new project of his ambition brought with it some new call upon the scanty resources of the industrious citizen of France, Englishmen were found to worship before his throne, to stand before it with sealed eyes in a trance of wonder, and to fill their mouths with his praise. Strange that such things "should drivel out of human lips," "e'en in the cradled weakness of the world."

In both houses ministers were triumphant in these

various debates; and the necessary supplies were voted for the Portuguese troops. But yet they were timid and cautious in all their measures; they made no such exertions as the emergency required; they sent no British reinforcements; they bade lord Wellington *risk nothing*, and hold himself always free for a safe and early embarkation; and it was seen plainly, from the whole tenour of their instructions, that if disaster befel him he must bear all the responsibility, and sink alone, not looking to be supported by them: but he had a heart, and a mind, and a courage, and a capacity, to sustain the weight of these difficulties which were heaped upon him.

Around him lay those brave battalions with which he had already achieved a triumph; and in them he again found, as he had always found, his ready and best support. Disease had wholly disappeared; they were again hale, efficient, and ready for the field. His own head-quarters, as we have before stated, were at Vizeu. His advance division lay in front of Almeida, and patroled as far as Ciudad Rodrigo. His cavalry, with the exception of the brigade furnishing relief for the outposts, lay in good cantonments in the rear; while the other divisions of infantry were so disposed, that the two great roads which pierce the mountainous region of Beira were effectually guarded; and these divisions were placed, moreover, in so close and judicious a connection, that they could readily be assembled at any point which the enemy should seriously menace, or which the general himself might choose for a demonstration on the frontier. The park of artillery was at head-

quarters. All these troops were comfortably quartered, the weather was favourable, and provisions wholesome and abundant. While lord Wellington, with the main body of his forces, observed all the country between the Douro and the Tagus, general Hill was posted south of this last river, with a division of infantry and another of Portuguese, to watch the corps of Mortier and of Regnier, who held the upper Estremadura, having their head-quarters at Merida, and patroled in force towards the frontier of Alentejo. Romana, who, withdrawing from Seville when the French passed the Sierra Morena, had thrown himself into Badajos, just in time to save it from the corps of Mortier, was still in that place, and in regular communication with Hill. Elvas was respectably garrisoned; but though general Hill kept his head-quarters usually at Portalegre, having a battalion advanced towards Albuquerque, and patroling to the Spanish frontier, yet his main position was at Abrantes.

The head-quarters of marshal Beresford and of the Portuguese army was at Thomar. The Portuguese troops now consisted of twenty-four regiments of the line, six of light infantry, and ten of cavalry, together with a due proportion of artillery. Their effective strength was about 31,000; of this number, many regiments were not yet sufficiently trained to act with the army, and remained therefore in garrison. Such brigades as were in the highest and most efficient state of dicipline were placed in British divisions; where, among English corps, it was rightly judged they would feel a greater confidence, and a more noble emulation. Lord Wel-

lington's personal activity, both of mind and body, during the long period in which the troops lay still and undisturbed, was incessant. Early in February, having visited his advanced divisions, he went again to Lisbon, and again examined his lines with care. Ten thousand labourers were at work on them. He returned about the middle of February, in high health and spirits, spoke not a word about the lines, only there went forth a report, which was not of course discouraged by the general, that the idea of forming these lines had been altogether abandoned, as the position was too extensive, and capable of being turned. The enemy about this time made various demonstrations against Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos. Upon the side of Alentejo, whenever the enemy moved down from Merida, and showed the heads of his columns, Hill, in pursuance of his instructions, put himself in motion, and marched a little forward; but, in Beira, lord Wellington never moved at all, nor could they ever tempt him to betray his dispositions or disconnect his divisions, and these he had so posted that he knew they could not be troubled or disturbed in that stage of the campaign. Meanwhile the guerrillas from Navarre and Biscay sent reports of the entry of large reinforcements from France; and as the spring advanced, the plot, as had been expected, thickened. During this period, lord Wellington was much and closely occupied in his bureau. There he worked alone, with simplicity and with the common secrecy of reserve; but without the slightest ostentation; no solemn mystery; no pomp of concealment; and never one look of importance. He commanded the corps of Hill, with as much minute attention to

the very detail of its movements as if it had been under his own eye, though it operated far away from him in the south. In like manner he directed every movement throughout the land, north as well as south; looking upon every road, and every stream, and every strong sierra, from the still observatory of his mind; while, as he bent over his maps and plans, he considered the correspondence and reports submitted to him. He answered all important communications with his own hand, and conveyed his instructions with that minute clearness which precluded the possibility of his being misunderstood. In the month of March, 1810, the British troops effective in the field did not amount to 22,000 combatants.

In this month the enemy were already assembling in force upon the Tormes. One corps destined to form a part of the invading army was, as a preliminary operation, directed to possess itself of Astorga. This ancient city is walled, and capable of defeating any sudden assault, but not defensible against a regular attack. Santocildes, who had repulsed an attempt of the enemy upon this place in the September preceding, was still the governor, and had a garrison of from two to three thousand men. Junot marched upon Astorga with 12,000 men, invested it in due form on the 21st of March, did not open his batteries till the 20th of April; and having breached the place, and again vainly summoned it, attempted to carry it by storm. After a fierce struggle he was repulsed, with the loss of 1500 men; but for all this signal success, Santocildes, being without stores or ammunition to continue the defence, made terms for the

unhappy citizens, and obtained the honours of war for the garrison.

After this conquest, which cost him 2500 men, Junot marched into old Castile, and joined the corps which had already commenced their operations against the frontier of Portugal; having their advanced post upon the Agueda; upon which river, and between it and the Coa, were those of the British light division under general Craufurd.

That the campaign would open with the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, was the general expectation; nor was it thought by any that Ciudad could make a long or an effectual defence. Nevertheless its old walls and imperfect defences had been put into a respectable condition, and the garrison was very amply supplied with stores and ammunition: but, as the place is commanded from many points, as its outworks would in the end materially assist the besiegers; and as there was no protection either for the soldiers or inhabitants from shells, it was not deemed a serious obstacle, or considered as giving promise of any long delay to the enemy's advance. Nevertheless, don Perez de Herrasti, the governor, though an old, was a tried man; and had been formerly the friend and comrade of Mariano Alvarez.

Within the Portuguese frontier, the fortress of Almeida was put in an excellent state of defence. A British colonel, with a garrison of 5000 Portuguese, was appointed governor; and the most sanguine expectations were formed concerning the stout resistance it would offer.

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